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WORLDLY WAYS
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WORLDLY WAYS & BYWAYS

BY

Eliot Gregory

("*An Idler*")

NEW YORK

Charles Scribner's Sons

MDCCCXCIX

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To

E. L. Godkin, Esqre.

SIR:

I WISH your name to appear on the first page of a volume, the composition of which was suggested by you.

Gratitude is said to be "the hope of favors to come;" these lines are written to prove that it may be the appreciation of kindnesses received.

Heartily yours

Eliot Gregory

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To the Reader

THERE existed formerly, in diplomatic circles, a curious custom, since fallen into disuse, entitled the Pêle Mêle, contrived doubtless by some distracted Master of Ceremonies to quell the endless jealousies and quarrels for precedence between courtiers and diplomatists of contending pretensions. Under this rule no rank was recognized, each person being allowed at banquet, fête, or other public ceremony only such place as he had been ingenious or fortunate enough to obtain.

Any one wishing to form an idea of the confusion that ensued, of the intrigues and expedients resorted to, not only in procuring prominent places, but also in ensuring the integrity of the Pêle Mêle, should glance over the amusing memoirs of M. de Ségur.

The aspiring nobles and ambassadors, harassed by this constant preoccupation, had little time or inclination left for any serious pursuit, since, to take a moment's repose or an hour's breathing space was to risk falling behind in the endless and aimless race. Strange as it may

appear, the knowledge that they owed place and preferment more to chance or intrigue than to any personal merit or inherited right, instead of lessening the value of the prizes for which all were striving, seemed only to enhance them in the eyes of the competitors.

Success was the unique standard by which they gauged their fellows. Those who succeeded revelled in the adulation of their friends, but when any one failed, the fickle crowd passed him by to bow at more fortunate feet.

No better picture could be found of the "world" of to-day, a perpetual Pêle Mêle, where such advantages only are conceded as we have been sufficiently enterprising to obtain, and are strong or clever enough to keep — a constant competition, a daily steeplechase, favorable to daring spirits and personal initiative but with the defect of keeping frail humanity ever on the qui vive.

Philosophers tell us, that we should seek happiness only in the calm of our own minds, not allowing external conditions or the opinions of others to influence our ways. This lofty detachment from environment is achieved by very few. Indeed, the philosophers themselves (who may be said to have invented the art of "posing") were

generally as vain as peacocks, profoundly preoccupied with the verdict of their contemporaries and their position as regards posterity.

Man is born gregarious and remains all his life a herding animal. As one keen observer has written, "So great is man's horror of being alone that he will seek the society of those he neither likes nor respects sooner than be left to his own." The laws and conventions that govern men's intercourse have, therefore, formed a tempting subject for the writers of all ages. Some have labored hoping to reform their generation, others have written to offer solutions for life's many problems.

Beaumarchais, whose penetrating wit left few subjects untouched, makes his Figaro put the subject aside with "Je me presse de rire de tout, de peur d'être obligè d'en pleurer."

The author of this little volume pretends to settle no disputes, aims at inaugurating no reforms. He has lightly touched on passing topics and jotted down, "to point a moral or adorn a tale," some of the more obvious foibles and inconsistencies of our American ways. If a stray bit of philosophy has here and there slipped in between the lines, it is mostly of the laughing "school," and used more in banter than in blame.

This much abused "world" is a fairly agreeable place if you do not take it seriously. Meet it with a friendly face and it will smile gayly back at you, but do not ask of it what it cannot give, or attribute to its verdicts more importance than they deserve.

ELIOT GREGORY

Newport, November first, 1897.

Worldly Ways & Byways

No. 1

Charm

WOMEN endowed by nature with the indescribable quality we call "charm" (for want of a better word), are the supreme development of a perfected race, the last word, as it were, of civilization; the flower of their kind, crowning centuries of growing refinement and cultivation. Other women may unite a thousand brilliant qualities, and attractive attributes, may be beautiful as Astarté or witty as Madame de Montespan, those endowed with the power of charm, have in all ages and under every sky, held undisputed rule over the hearts of their generation.

When we look at the portraits of the enchantresses whom history tells us have ruled the world by their charm, and swayed the destinies of empires at their fancy, we are astonished to find that they have rarely been beautiful. From Cleopatra or Mary of Scotland down to Lola Montez, the tell-tale coin or canvas reveals the same marvellous fact. We wonder how these women attained

such influence over the men of their day, their husbands or lovers. We would do better to look around us, or inward, and observe what is passing in our own hearts.

Pause, reader mine, a moment and reflect. Who has held the first place in your thoughts, filled your soul, and influenced your life? Was she the most beautiful of your acquaintances, the radiant vision that dazzled your boyish eyes? Has she not rather been some gentle, quiet woman whom you hardly noticed the first time your paths crossed, but who gradually grew to be a part of your life—to whom you instinctively turned for consolation in moments of discouragement, for counsel in your difficulties, and whose welcome was the bright moment in your day, looked forward to through long hours of toil and worry?

In the hurly-burly of life we lose sight of so many things our fathers and mothers clung to, and have drifted so far away from their gentle customs and simple, home-loving habits, that one wonders what impression our society would make on a woman of a century ago, could she by some spell be dropped into the swing of modern days. The good soul would be apt to find it rather a far cry from the quiet pleasures of her youth, to "a ladies' amateur bicycle race" that formed the attraction recently at a summer resort.

That we should have come to think it natural

and proper for a young wife and mother to pass her mornings at golf, lunching at the club-house to "save time," returning home only for a hurried change of toilet to start again on a bicycle or for a round of calls, an occupation that will leave her just the half-hour necessary to slip into a dinner gown, and then for her to pass the evening in dancing or at the card-table, shows, when one takes the time to think of it, how unconsciously we have changed, and (with all apologies to the gay hostesses and graceful athletes of to-day) not for the better.

It is just in the subtle quality of charm that the women of the last ten years have fallen away from their elder sisters. They have been carried along by a love of sport, and by the set of fashion's tide, not stopping to ask themselves whither they are floating. They do not realize all the importance of their acts nor the true meaning of their metamorphosis.

The dear creatures should be content, for they have at last escaped from the bondage of ages, have broken their chains, and vaulted over their prison walls. "Lords and masters" have gradually become very humble and obedient servants, and the "love, honour, and obey" of the marriage service might now more logically be spoken by the man; on the lips of the women of to-day it is but a graceful "*façon de parler*," and holds only those who choose to be bound.

It is not my intention to rail against the short-

comings of the day. That ungrateful task I leave to sterner moralists, and hopeful souls who naïvely imagine they can stem the current of an epoch with the barrier of their eloquence, or sweep back an ocean of innovations by their logic. I should like, however, to ask my sisters one question: Are they quite sure that women gain by these changes? Do they imagine, these "sporty" young females in short-cut skirts and mannish shirts and ties, that it is seductive to a lover, or a husband to see his idol in a violent perspiration, her draggled hair blowing across a sunburned face, panting up a long hill in front of him on a bicycle, frantic at having lost her race? Shade of gentle William! who said

A woman moved, is like a fountain troubled,—
Muddy, ill-seeming, thick, bereft of beauty.
And while it is so, none so dry or thirsty
Will deign to sip or touch one drop of it.

Is the modern girl under the impression that men will be contented with poor imitations of themselves, to share their homes and be the mothers of their children? She is throwing away the substance for the shadow!

The moment women step out from the sanctuary of their homes, the glamour that girlhood or maternity has thrown around them cast aside, that moment will they cease to rule mankind. Women may agitate until they have obtained political recognition, but will awake from their

foolish dream of power, realizing too late what they have sacrificed to obtain it, that the price has been very heavy, and the fruit of their struggles bitter on their lips.

There are few men, I imagine, of my generation to whom the words "home" and "mother" have not a penetrating charm, who do not look back with softened heart and tender thoughts to fireside scenes of evening readings and twilight talks at a mother's knee, realizing that the best in their natures owes its growth to these influences.

I sometimes look about me and wonder what the word "mother" will mean later, to modern little boys. It will evoke, I fear, a confused remembrance of some centaur-like being, half woman, half wheel, or as it did to neglected little Rawdon Crawley, the vision of a radiant creature in gauze and jewels, driving away to endless *fêtes*—*fêtes* followed by long mornings, when he was told not to make any noise, or play too loudly, "as poor mamma is resting." What other memories can the "successful" woman of to-day hope to leave in the minds of her children? If the child remembers his mother in this way, will not the man who has known and perhaps loved her, feel the same sensation of empty futility when her name is mentioned?

The woman who proposes a game of cards to a youth who comes to pass an hour in her society, can hardly expect him to carry away a par-

ticularly tender memory of her as he leaves the house. The girl who has rowed, ridden, or raced at a man's side for days, with the object of getting the better of him at some sport or pastime, cannot reasonably hope to be connected in his thoughts with ideas more tender or more elevated than "odds" or "handicaps," with an undercurrent of pique if his unsexed companion has "downed" him successfully.

What man, unless he be singularly dissolute or unfortunate, but turns his steps, when he can, towards some dainty parlor where he is sure of finding a smiling, soft-voiced woman, whose welcome he knows will soothe his irritated nerves and restore the even balance of his temper, whose charm will work its subtle way into his troubled spirit? The wife he loves, or the friend he admires and respects, will do more for him in one such quiet hour when two minds commune, coming closer to the real man, and moving him to braver efforts, and nobler aims, than all the beauties and "sporty" acquaintances of a lifetime. No matter what a man's education or taste is, none are insensible to such an atmosphere or to the grace and witchery a woman can lend to the simplest surroundings. She need not be beautiful or brilliant to hold him in lifelong allegiance, if she but possess this magnetism.

Madame Récamier was a beautiful, but not a brilliant woman, yet she held men her slaves for years. To know her was to fall under her charm,

and to feel it once was to remain her adorer for life. She will go down to history as the type of a fascinating woman. Being asked once by an acquaintance what spell she worked on mankind that enabled her to hold them for ever at her feet, she laughingly answered:

"I have always found two words sufficient. When a visitor comes into my salon, I say, '*Enfin*!' and when he gets up to go away, I say, '*Déjà*!'"

"What is this wonderful 'charm' he is writing about?" I hear some sprightly maiden inquire as she reads these lines. My dear young lady, if you ask the question, you have judged yourself and been found wanting. But to satisfy you as far as I can, I will try and define it—not by telling you what it is; that is beyond my power—but by negatives, the only way in which subtle subjects can be approached.

A woman of charm is never flustered and never *distraite*. She talks little, and rarely of herself, remembering that bores are persons who insist on talking about themselves. She does not break the thread of a conversation by irrelevant questions or confabulate in an undertone with the servants. No one of her guests receives more of her attention than another and none are neglected. She offers to each one who speaks the homage of her entire attention. She never makes an effort to be brilliant or entertain with her wit. She is far too clever for that. Neither does she

volunteer information nor converse about her troubles or her ailments, nor wander off into details about people you do not know.

She is all things to each man she likes, in the best sense of that phrase, appreciating his qualities, stimulating him to better things.

——for his gayer hours
She has a voice of gladness and a smile and eloquence of beauty; and she glides
Into his darker musings with a mild and healing sympathy that steals away
Their sharpness ere he is aware.

No. 2

The Moth and the Star

THE truth of the saying that "it is always the unexpected that happens," receives in this country a confirmation from an unlooked-for quarter, as does the fact of human nature being always, discouragingly, the same in spite of varied surroundings. This sounds like a paradox, but is an exceedingly simple statement easily proved.

That the great mass of Americans, drawn as they are from such varied sources, should take any interest in the comings and goings or social doings of a small set of wealthy and fashionable people, is certainly an unexpected development. That to read of the amusements and home life of a clique of people with whom they have little in common, whose whole education and point of view are different from their own, and whom they have rarely seen and never expect to meet, should afford the average citizen any amusement seems little short of impossible.

One accepts as a natural sequence that abroad (where an hereditary nobility have ruled for centuries, and accustomed the people to look up to them as the visible embodiment of all that is splendid and unattainable in life) such interest should exist. That the home-coming of an English or French nobleman to his estates should

excite the enthusiasm of hundreds more or less dependent upon him for their amusement or more material advantages; that his marriage to an heiress—meaning to them the re-opening of a long-closed *château* and the beginning of a period of prosperity for the district—should excite his neighbors is not to be wondered at.

It is well known that whole regions have been made prosperous by the residence of a court, witness the wealth and trade brought into Scotland by the Queen's preference for "the Land of Cakes," and the golden harvest and uncounted good results which followed Her Gracious Majesty's recent visit to Ireland. But in this land, where every reason for interesting one class in another seems lacking, that thousands of well-to-do people (half the time not born in this hemisphere), should delightedly devour columns of incorrect information about New York dances and Lenox house-parties, winter cruises, or Newport coaching parades, strikes the observer as the "unexpected" in its purest form.

That this interest exists is absolutely certain. During a trip in the West, some seasons ago, I was dumbfounded to find that the members of a certain New York set were familiarly spoken of by their first names, and was assailed with all sorts of eager questions when it was discovered that I knew them. A certain young lady, at that time a belle in New York, was currently called *Sally*, and a well-known sportsman *Fred*,

by thousands of people who had never seen either of them. It seems impossible, does it not? Let us look a little closer into the reason of this interest, and we shall find how simple is the apparent paradox.

Perhaps in no country, in all the world, do the immense middle classes lead such uninteresting lives, and have such limited resources at their disposal for amusement or the passing of leisure hours.

Abroad the military bands play constantly in the public parks; the museums and palaces are always open wherein to pass rainy Sunday afternoons; every village has its religious *fêtes* and local fair, attended with dancing and games. All these mental relaxations are lacking in our newer civilization; life is stripped of everything that is not distinctly practical; the dull round of weekly toil is only broken by the duller idleness of an American Sunday. Naturally, these people long for something outside of themselves and their narrow sphere.

Suddenly there arises a class whose wealth permits them to break through the iron circle of work and boredom, who do picturesque and delightful things, which appeal directly to the imagination; they build a summer residence complete, in six weeks, with furniture and bric-a-brac, on the top of a roadless mountain; they sail in fairylike yachts to summer seas, and marry their daughters to the heirs of ducal houses; they float

up the Nile in dahabeeyah, or pass the "month of flowers" in far Japan.

It is but human nature to delight in reading of these things. Here the great mass of the people find (and eagerly seize on), the element of romance lacking in their lives, infinitely more enthralling than the doings of any novel's heroine. It is real! It is taking place! and—still deeper reason—in every ambitious American heart lingers the secret hope that with luck and good management they too may do those very things, or at least that their children will enjoy the fortunes they have gained, in just those ways. The gloom of the monotonous present is brightened, the patient toiler returns to his desk with something definite before him—an objective point—towards which he can struggle; he knows that this is no impossible dream. Dozens have succeeded and prove to him what energy and enterprise can accomplish.

Do not laugh at this suggestion; it is far truer than you imagine. Many a weary woman has turned from such reading to her narrow duties, feeling that life is not all work, and with renewed hope in the possibilities of the future.

Doubtless a certain amount of purely idle curiosity is mingled with the other feelings. I remember quite well showing our city sights to a bored party of Western friends, and failing entirely to amuse them, when, happening to mention as we drove up town, "there goes Mr.

Blank," (naming a prominent leader of cotillions), my guests nearly fell over each other and out of the carriage in their eagerness to see the gentleman of whom they had read so much, and who was, in those days, a power in his way, and several times after they expressed the greatest satisfaction at having seen him.

I have found, with rare exceptions, and the experience has been rather widely gathered all over the country, that this interest—or call it what you will—has been entirely without spite or bitterness, rather the delight of a child in a fairy story. For people are rarely envious of things far removed from their grasp. You will find that a woman who is bitter because her neighbor has a girl "help" or a more comfortable cottage, rarely feels envy towards the owners of opera-boxes or yachts. Such heart-burnings (let us hope they are few) are among a class born in the shadow of great wealth, and bred up with tastes that they can neither relinquish nor satisfy. The large majority of people show only a good-natured inclination to chaff, none of the "class feeling" which certain papers and certain politicians try to excite. Outside of the large cities with their foreign-bred, semi-anarchistic populations, the tone is perfectly friendly; for the simple reason that it never entered into the head of any American to imagine that there *was* any class difference. To him his rich neighbors are simply his lucky neighbors, almost his relations,

who, starting from a common stock, have been able to "get there" sooner than he has done. So he wishes them luck on the voyage in which he expects to join them as soon as he has had time to make a fortune.

So long as the world exists, or at least until we have reformed it and adopted Mr. Bellamy's delightful scheme of existence as described in "Looking Backward," great fortunes will be made, and painful contrasts be seen, especially in cities, and it would seem to be the duty of the press to soften—certainly not to sharpen—the edge of discontent. As long as human nature is human nature, and the poor care to read of the doings of the more fortunate, by all means give them the reading they enjoy and demand, but let it be written in a kindly spirit so that it may be a cultivation as well as a recreation. Treat this perfectly natural and honest taste honestly and naturally, for, after all, it is

The desire of the moth for the star,
Of the night for the morrow.
The devotion to something afar
From the sphere of our sorrow.

No. 3

Contrasted Travelling

WHEN our parents went to Europe fifty years ago, it was the event of a lifetime—a tour lovingly mapped out in advance with advice from travelled friends. Passports were procured, books read, wills made, and finally, prayers were offered up in church and solemn leave-taking performed. Once on the other side, descriptive letters were conscientiously written, and eagerly read by friends at home,—in spite of these epistles being on the thinnest of paper and with crossing carried to a fine art, for postage was high in the forties. Above all, a journal was kept.

Such a journal lies before me as I write. Four little volumes in worn morocco covers and faded "Italian" writing, more precious than all my other books combined, their sight recalls that lost time—my youth—when, as a reward, they were unlocked that I might look at the drawings, and the sweetest voice in the world would read to me from them! Happy, vanished days, that are so far away they seem to have been in another existence!

The first volume opens with the voyage across the Atlantic, made in an American clipper (a model unsurpassed the world over), which was accomplished in thirteen days, a feat

rarely equalled now, by sail. Genial Captain Nye was in command. The same who later, when a steam propelled vessel was offered him, refused, as unworthy of a seaman, "to boil a kettle across the ocean."

Life friendships were made in those little cabins, under the swinging lamp the travellers re-read last volumes so as to be prepared to appreciate everything on landing. Ireland, England and Scotland were visited with an enthusiasm born of Scott, the tedium of long coaching journeys being beguiled by the first "numbers" of "Pickwick," over which the men of the party roared, but which the ladies did not care for, thinking it vulgar, and not to be compared to "Waverley," "Thaddeus of Warsaw," or "The Mysteries of Udolpho."

A circular letter to our diplomatic agents abroad was presented in each city, a rite invariably followed by an invitation to dine, for which occasions a black satin frock with a low body and a few simple ornaments, including (supreme elegance) a diamond cross, were carried in the trunks. In London a travelling carriage was bought and stocked, the indispensable courier engaged, half guide, half servant, who was expected to explore a city, or wait at table, as occasion required. Four days were passed between Havre and Paris, and the slow progress across Europe was accomplished, Murray in one hand and Byron in the other.

One page used particularly to attract my boyish attention. It was headed by a naïve little drawing of the carriage at an Italian inn door, and described how, after the dangers and discomforts of an Alpine pass, they descended by sunny slopes into Lombardy. Oh! the rapture that breathes from those simple pages! The vintage scenes, the mid-day halt for luncheon eaten in the open air, the afternoon start, the front seat of the carriage heaped with purple grapes, used to fire my youthful imagination and now recalls Madame de Staël's line on perfect happiness: "To be young! to be in love! to be in Italy!"

Do people enjoy Europe as much now? I doubt it! It has become too much a matter of course, a necessary part of the routine of life. Much of the bloom is brushed from foreign scenes by descriptive books and photographs, that St. Mark's or Mt. Blanc has become as familiar to a child's eye as the house he lives in, and in consequence the reality now instead of being a revelation is often a disappointment.

In my youth, it was still an event to cross. I remember my first voyage on the old side-wheeled *Scotia*, and Captain Judkins in a wheeled chair, and a perpetual bad temper, being pushed about the deck; and our delight, when the inevitable female asking him (three days out) how far we were from land, got the answer "about a mile!"

"Indeed! How interesting! In which direction?"

"In that direction, madam," shouted the captain, pointing downward as he turned his back to her.

If I remember, we were then thirteen days getting to Liverpool, and made the acquaintance on board of the people with whom we travelled during most of that winter. Imagine anyone now making an acquaintance on board a steamer! In those simple days people depended on the friendships made at summer hotels or boarding-houses for their visiting list. At present, when a girl comes out, her mother presents her to everybody she will be likely to know if she were to live a century. In the seventies, ladies cheerfully shared their state-rooms with women they did not know, and often became friends in consequence; but now, unless a certain deck-suite can be secured, with bath and sitting-room, on one or two particular "steamers," the great lady is in despair. Yet our mothers were quite as refined as the present generation, only they took life simply, as they found it.

Children are now taken abroad so young, that before they have reached an age to appreciate what they see, Europe has become to them a twice-told tale. So true is this, that a receipt for making children good Americans is to bring them up abroad. Once they get back here it is hard to entice them away again.

With each improvement in the speed of our steamers, something of the glamour of Europe vanishes. The crowds that yearly rush across see and appreciate less in a lifetime than our parents did in their one tour abroad. A good lady of my acquaintance was complaining recently how much Paris bored her.

"What can you do to pass the time?" she asked. I innocently answered that I knew nothing so entrancing as long mornings passed at the Louvre.

"Oh, yes, I do that too," she replied, "but I like the 'Bon Marché' best!"

A trip abroad has become a purely social function to a large number of wealthy Americans, including "presentation" in London and a winter in Rome or Cairo. And just as a "smart" Englishman is sure to tell you that he has never visited the "Tower," it has become good form to ignore the sight-seeing side of Europe; hundreds of New Yorkers never seeing anything of Paris beyond the Rue de la Paix and the Bois. They would as soon think of going to Cluny or St. Denis as of visiting the museum in our park!

Such people go to Fontainebleau because they are buying furniture, and they wish to see the best models. They go to Versailles on the coach and "do" the Palace during the half-hour before luncheon. Beyond that, enthusiasm rarely carries them. As soon as they have settled themselves at the Bristol or the Rhin begins the end-

less treadmill of leaving cards on all the people just seen at home, and whom they will meet again in a couple of months at Newport or Bar Harbor. This duty and the all-entrancing occupation of getting clothes fills up every spare hour. Indeed, clothes seem to pervade the air of Paris in May, the conversation rarely deviating from them. If you meet a lady you know looking ill, and ask the cause, it generally turns out to be "four hours a day standing to be fitted." Incredible as it may seem, I have been told of one plain maiden lady, who makes a trip across, spring and autumn, with the sole object of getting her two yearly outfits.

Remembering the hundreds of cultivated people whose dream in life (often unrealized from lack of means) has been to go abroad and visit the scenes their reading has made familiar, and knowing what such a trip would mean to them, and how it would be looked back upon during the rest of an obscure life, I felt it almost a duty to "suppress" a wealthy female (doubtless an American cousin of Lady Midas) when she informed me, the other day, that decidedly she would not go abroad this spring.

"It is not necessary. Worth has my measures!"

No. 4

The Outer and the Inner Woman

IT is a sad commentary on our boasted civilization that cases of shoplifting occur more and more frequently each year, in which the delinquents are women of education and refinement, or at least belong to families and occupy positions in which one would expect to find those qualities! The reason, however, is not difficult to discover.

In the wake of our hasty and immature prosperity has come (as it does to all suddenly enriched societies) a love of ostentation, a desire to dazzle the crowd by displays of luxury and rich trappings indicative of crude and vulgar standards. The newly acquired money, instead of being expended for solid comforts or articles which would afford lasting satisfaction, is lavished on what can be worn in public, or the outer shell of display, while the home table and fireside belongings are neglected. A glance around our theatres, or at the men and women in our crowded thoroughfares, is sufficient to reveal to even a casual observer that the mania for fine clothes and what is costly, *per se*, has become the besetting sin of our day and our land.

The tone of most of the papers and of our theatrical advertisements reflects this feeling.

The amount of money expended for a work of art or a new building is mentioned before any comment as to its beauty or fitness. A play is spoken of as "Manager So and So's thirty-thousand-dollar production!" The fact that a favorite actress will appear in four different dresses during the three acts of a comedy, each toilet being a special creation designed for her by a leading Parisian house, is considered of supreme importance and is dwelt upon in the programme as a special attraction.

It would be astonishing if the taste of our women were different, considering the way clothes are eternally being dangled before their eyes. Leading papers publish illustrated supplements devoted exclusively to the subject of attire, thus carrying temptation into every humble home, and suggesting unattainable luxuries. Windows in many of the larger shops contain life-sized manikins loaded with the latest costly and ephemeral caprices of fashion arranged to catch the eye of the poorer class of women, who stand in hundreds gazing at the display like larks attracted by a mirror! Watch those women as they turn away, and listen to their sighs of discontent and envy. Do they not tell volumes about petty hopes and ambitions?

I do not refer to the wealthy women whose toilets are in keeping with their incomes and the general footing of their households; that they should spend more or less in fitting themselves

out daintily is of little importance. The point where this subject becomes painful is in families of small means where young girls imagine that to be elaborately dressed is the first essential of existence, and, in consequence, bend their labors and their intelligence towards this end. Last spring I asked an old friend where she and her daughters intended passing their summer. Her answer struck me as being characteristic enough to quote: "We should much prefer," she said, "returning to Bar Harbor, for we all enjoy that place and have many friends there. But the truth is, my daughters have bought themselves very little in the way of toilet this year, as our finances are not in a flourishing condition. So my poor girls will be obliged to make their last year's dresses do for another season. Under these circumstances, it is out of the question for us to return a second summer to the same place."

I do not know how this anecdote strikes my readers. It made me thoughtful and sad to think that, in a family of intelligent and practical women, such a reason should be considered sufficient to outweigh enjoyment, social relations, even health, and allowed to change the plans of an entire family.

As American women are so fond of copying English ways they should be willing to take a few lessons on the subject of raiment from across the water. As this is not intended to be a dissertation on "How to Dress Well on Nothing

a Year," and as I feel the greatest diffidence in approaching a subject of which I know absolutely nothing, it will be better to sheer off from these reefs and quicksands. Every one who reads these lines will know perfectly well what is meant, when reference is made to the good sense and practical utility of English women's dress.

What disgusts and angers me (when my way takes me into our surface or elevated cars or into ferry boats and local trains) is the utter dissonance between the outfit of most of the women I meet and their position and occupation. So universal is this, that it might almost be laid down as an axiom, that the American woman, no matter in what walk of life you observe her, or what the time or the place, is always persistently and grotesquely overdressed. From the women who frequent the hotels of our summer or winter resorts, down all the steps of the social staircase to the char-woman, who consents (spasmodically) to remove the dust and waste-papers from my office, there seems to be the same complete disregard of fitness. The other evening, in leaving my rooms, I brushed against a portly person in the half-light of the corridor. There was a shimmer of (what appeared to my inexperienced eyes as) costly stuffs, a huge hat crowned the shadow itself, "topped by nodding plumes," which seemed to account for the depleted condition of my feather duster.

I found on inquiring of the janitor, that the

dressy person I had met, was the char-woman in street attire, and that a closet was set aside in the building, for the special purpose of her morning and evening transformations, which she underwent in the belief that her social position in Avenue A would suffer, should she appear in the streets wearing anything less costly than seal-skin and velvet or such imitations of those expensive materials as her stipend would permit.

I have as tenants of a small wooden house in Jersey City, a bank clerk, his wife and their three daughters. He earns in the neighborhood of fifteen hundred dollars a year. Their rent (with which, by the way, they are always in arrears) is three hundred dollars. I am favored spring and autumn by a visit from the ladies of that family, in the hope (generally futile) of inducing me to do some ornamental papering or painting in their residence, subjects on which they have by experience found my agent to be unapproachable. When those four women descend upon me, I am fairly dazzled by the splendor of their attire, and lost in wonder as to how the price of all that finery can have been squeezed out of the twelve remaining hundreds of their income. When I meet the father he is shabby to the outer limits of the genteel. His hat has, I am sure, supported the suns and snowstorms of a dozen seasons. There is a threadbare shine on his apparel that suggests a heartache in each whitened

seam, but the ladies are mirrors of fashion, as well as moulds of form. What can remain for any creature comforts after all those fine clothes have been paid for? And how much is put away for the years when the long-suffering money maker will be past work, or saved towards the time when sickness or accident shall appear on the horizon? How those ladies had the "nerve" to enter a ferry boat or crowd into a cable car, dressed as they were, has always been a marvel to me. A landau and two liveried servants would barely have been in keeping with their appearance.

Not long ago, a great English nobleman, who is also famous in the yachting world, visited this country accompanied by his two daughters, high-bred and genial ladies. No self-respecting American shop girl or fashionable typewriter would have condescended to appear in the inexpensive attire which those English women wore. Wherever one met them, at dinner, *fête*, or ball, they were always the most simply dressed women in the room. I wonder if it ever occurred to any of their gorgeously attired hostesses, that it was because their trans-atlantic guests were so sure of their position, that they contented themselves with such simple toilets knowing that nothing they might wear could either improve or alter their standing.

In former ages, sumptuary laws were enacted by parental governments, in the hope of suppressing extravagance in dress, the state of affairs

we deplore now, not being a new development of human weakness, but as old as wealth.

The desire to shine by the splendor of one's trappings is the first idea of the parvenu, especially here in this country, where the ambitious are denied the pleasure of acquiring a title, and where official rank carries with it so little social weight. Few more striking ways present themselves to the crude and half-educated for the expenditure of a new fortune than the purchase of sumptuous apparel, the satisfaction being immediate and material. The wearer of a complete and perfect toilet must experience a delight of which the uninitiated know nothing, for such cruel sacrifices are made and so many privations endured to procure this satisfaction. When I see groups of women, clad in the latest designs of purple and fine linen, stand shivering on street corners of a winter night, until they can crowd into a car, I doubt if the joy they get from their clothes, compensates them for the creature comforts they are forced to forego, and I wonder if it never occurs to them to spend less on their wardrobes and so feel they can afford to return from a theatre or concert comfortably, in a cab, as a foreign woman, with their income would do.

There is a stoical determination about the American point of view that compels a certain amount of respect. Our countrywomen will deny themselves pleasures, will economize on their food

and will remain in town during the summer, but when walking abroad they must be clad in the best, so that no one may know by their appearance if the income be counted by hundreds or thousands.

While these standards prevail and the female mind is fixed on this subject with such dire intent, it is not astonishing that a weaker sister is occasionally tempted beyond her powers of resistance. Nor that each day a new case of a well-dressed woman thieving in a shop reaches our ears. The poor feeble-minded creature is not to blame. She is but the reflexion of the minds around her and is probably like the lady Emerson tells of, who confessed to him "that the sense of being perfectly well-dressed had given her a feeling of inward tranquillity which religion was powerless to bestow."

No. 5

On Some Gilded Misalliances

A DEAR old American lady, who lived the greater part of her life in Rome, and received every body worth knowing in her spacious drawing-rooms, far up in the dim vastnesses of a Roman palace, used to say that she had only known one really happy marriage made by an American girl abroad.

In those days, being young and innocent, I considered that remark cynical, and in my heart thought nothing could be more romantic and charming than for a fair compatriot to assume an historic title and retire to her husband's estates, and rule smilingly over him and a devoted tenantry, as in the last act of a comic opera, when a rose-colored light is burning and the orchestra plays the last brilliant chords of a wedding march.

There seemed to my perverted sense a certain poetic justice about the fact that money, gained honestly but prosaically, in groceries or gas, should go to regild an ancient blazon or prop up the crumbling walls of some stately palace abroad.

Many thoughtful years and many cruel realities have taught me that my gracious hostess of the "seventies" was right, and that marriage under these conditions is apt to be much more like the comic opera after the curtain has been rung down, when the lights are out, the applaud-

ing public gone home, and the weary actors brought slowly back to the present and the positive, are wondering how they are to pay their rent or dodge the warrant in ambush around the corner.

International marriages usually come about from a deficient knowledge of the world. The father becomes rich, the family travel abroad, some mutual friend (often from purely interested motives) produces a suitor for the hand of the daughter, in the shape of a "prince" with a title that makes the whole simple American family quiver with delight.

After a few visits the suitor declares himself; the girl is flattered, the father loses his head, seeing visions of his loved daughter hob-nobbing with royalty, and (intoxicating thought!) snubbing the "swells" at home who had shown reluctance to recognize him and his family.

It is next to impossible for him to get any reliable information about his future son-in-law in a country where, as an American, he has few social relations, belongs to no club, and whose idiom is a sealed book to him. Every circumstance conspires to keep the flaws on the article for sale out of sight and place the suitor in an advantageous light. Several weeks' "courting" follows, paterfamilias agrees to part with a handsome share of his earnings, and a marriage is "arranged."

In the case where the girl has retained some

of her self-respect the suitor is made to come to her country for the ceremony. And, that the contrast between European ways and our simple habits may not be too striking, an establishment is hastily got together, with hired liveries and new-bought carriages, as in a recent case in this state. The sensational papers write up this "international union," and publish "faked" portraits of the bride and her noble spouse. The sovereign of the groom's country (enchanted that some more American money is to be imported into his land) sends an economical present and an autograph letter. The act ends. Limelight and slow music!

In a few years rumors of dissent and trouble float vaguely back to the girl's family. Finally, either a great scandal occurs, and there is one dishonored home the more in the world, or an expatriated woman, thousands of miles from the friends and relatives who might be of some comfort to her, makes up her mind to accept "anything" for the sake of her children, and attempts to build up some sort of an existence out of the remains of her lost illusions, and the father wakes up from his dream to realize that his wealth has only served to ruin what he loved best in all the world.

Sometimes the conditions are delightfully comic, as in a well-known case, where the daughter, who married into an indolent, happy-go-lucky Italian family, had inherited her father's

business push and energy along with his fortune, and immediately set about "running" her husband's estate as she had seen her father do his bank. She tried to revive a half-forgotten industry in the district, scraped and whitewashed their picturesque old villa, proposed her husband's entering business, and in short dashed head down against all his inherited traditions and national prejudices, until her new family loathed the sight of the brisk American face, and the poor she had tried to help, sulked in their newly drained houses and refused to be comforted. Her ways were not Italian ways, and she seemed to the nun-like Italian ladies, almost unsexed, as she tramped about the fields, talking artificial manure and subsoil drainage with the men. Yet neither she nor her husband was to blame. The young Italian had but followed the teachings of his family, which decreed that the only honorable way for an aristocrat to acquire wealth was to marry it. The American wife honestly tried to do her duty in this new position, naïvely thinking she could engraft transatlantic "go" upon the indolent Italian character. Her work was in vain; she made herself and her husband so unpopular that they are now living in this country, regretting too late the error of their ways.

Another case but little less laughable, is that of a Boston girl with a neat little fortune of her own, who, when married to the young Viennese

of her choice, found that he expected her to live with his family on the third floor of their "palace" (the two lower floors being rented to foreigners), and as there was hardly enough money for a box at the opera, she was not expected to go, whereas his position made it necessary for him to have a stall and appear there nightly among the men of his rank, the astonished and disillusioned Bostonian remaining at home *en tête-à-tête* with the women of his family, who seemed to think this the most natural arrangement in the world.

It certainly is astonishing that we, the most patriotic of nations, with such high opinion of ourselves and our institutions, should be so ready to hand over our daughters and our ducats to the first foreigner who asks for them, often requiring less information about him than we should consider necessary before buying a horse or a dog.

Women of no other nation have this mania for espousing aliens. Nowhere else would a girl with a large fortune dream of marrying out of her country. Her highest ideal of a husband would be a man of her own kin. It is the rarest thing in the world to find a well-born French, Spanish, or Italian woman married to a foreigner and living away from her country. How can a woman expect to be happy separated from all the ties and traditions of her youth? If she is taken abroad young, she may still hope to re-

place her friends as is often done. But the real reason of unhappiness (greater and deeper than this) lies in the fundamental difference of the whole social structure between our country and that of her adoption, and the radically different way of looking at every side of life.

Surely a girl must feel that a man who allows a marriage to be arranged for him (and only signs the contract because its pecuniary clauses are to his satisfaction, and who would withdraw in a moment if these were suppressed), must have an entirely different point of view from her own on all the vital issues of life.

Foreigners undoubtedly make excellent husbands for their own women. But they are, except in rare cases, unsatisfactory helpmeets for American girls. It is impossible to touch on more than a side or two of this subject. But as an illustration the following contrasted stories may be cited:

Two sisters of an aristocratic American family, each with an income of over forty thousand dollars a year, recently married French noblemen. They naturally expected to continue abroad the life they had led at home, in which opera boxes, saddle horses, and constant entertaining were matters of course. In both cases, our compatriots discovered that their husbands (neither of them penniless) had entirely different views. In the first place, they were told that it was considered "bad form" in France for young

married women to entertain; besides, the money was needed for improvements, and in many other ways, and as every well-to-do French family puts aside at least a third of its income as *dots* for the children (boys as well as girls), these brides found themselves cramped for money for the first time in their lives, and obliged, during their one month a year in Paris, to put up with hired traps, and depend on their friends for evenings at the opera.

This story is a telling set-off to the case of an American wife, who one day received a windfall in the form of a check for a tidy amount. She immediately proposed a trip abroad to her husband, but found that he preferred to remain at home in the society of his horses and dogs. So our fair compatriot starts off (with his full consent), has her outing, spends her little "pile," and returns after three or four months to the home of her delighted spouse.

Do these two stories need any comment? Let our sisters and their friends think twice before they make themselves irrevocably wheels in a machine whose working is unknown to them, lest they be torn to pieces as it moves. Having the good luck to be born in the "paradise of women," let them beware how they leave it, charm the serpent never so wisely, for they may find themselves, like the Peri, outside the gate.

No. 6

The Complacency of Mediocrity

FULL as small intellects are of queer kinks, unexplained turnings and groundless likes and dislikes, the bland contentment that buoys up the incompetent is the most difficult of all vagaries to account for. Rarely do twenty-four hours pass without examples of this exasperating weakness appearing on the surface of those shallows that commonplace people so naïvely call "their minds."

What one would expect is extreme modesty, in the half-educated or the ignorant, and self-approbation higher up in the scale, where it might more reasonably dwell. Experience, however, teaches that exactly the opposite is the case among those who have achieved success.

The accidents of a life turned by chance out of the beaten tracks, have thrown me at times into acquaintanceship with some of the greater lights of the last thirty years. And not only have they been, as a rule, most unassuming men and women; but in the majority of cases positively self-depreciatory; doubting of themselves and their talents, constantly aiming at greater perfection in their art or a higher development of their powers, never contented with what they have achieved, beyond the idea that it has been

another step toward their goal. Knowing this, it is always a shock on meeting the mediocre people who form such a discouraging majority in any society, to discover that they are all so pleased with themselves, their achievements, their place in the world, and their own ability and discernment!

Who has not sat chafing in silence while Mediocrity, in a white waistcoat and jangling fobs, occupied the after-dinner hour in imparting second-hand information as his personal views on literature and art? Can you not hear him saying once again: "I don't pretend to know anything about art and all that sort of thing, you know, but when I go to an exhibition I can always pick out the best pictures at a glance. Sort of a way I have, and I never make mistakes, you know."

Then go and watch, as I have, Henri Rochefort as he laboriously forms the opinions that are to appear later in one of his "*Salons*," realizing the while that he is *facile princeps* among the art critics of his day, that with a line he can make or mar a reputation and by a word draw the admiring crowd around an unknown canvas. While Rochefort toils and ponders and hesitates, do you suppose a doubt as to his own astuteness ever dims the self-complacency of White Waistcoat? Never!

There lies the strength of the feeble-minded. By a special dispensation of Providence, they can never see but one side of a subject, so are

always convinced that they are right, and from the height of their contentment, look down on those who chance to differ with them.

A lady who has gathered into her dainty salons the fruit of many years' careful study and tireless "weeding" will ask anxiously if you are quite sure you like the effect of her latest acquisition—some eighteenth-century statuette or screen (flotsam, probably, from the great shipwreck of Versailles), and listen earnestly to your verdict. The good soul who has just furnished her house by contract, with the latest "Louis Fourteenth Street" productions, conducts you complacently through her chambers of horrors, wreathed in tranquil smiles, born of ignorance and that smug assurance granted only to the—small.

When a small intellect goes in for cultivating itself and improving its mind, you realize what the poet meant in asserting that a little learning was a dangerous thing. For Mediocrity is apt, when it dines out, to get up a subject beforehand, and announce to an astonished circle, as quite new and personal discoveries, that the Renaissance was introduced into France from Italy, or that Columbus in his day made important "finds."

When the incompetent advance another step and write or paint—which, alas! is only too frequent—the world of art and literature is flooded with their productions. When White Waistcoat,

for example, takes to painting, late in life, and comes to you, canvas in hand, for criticism (read praise), he is apt to remark modestly:

"Corot never painted until he was fifty, and I am only forty-eight. So I feel I should not let myself be discouraged."

The problem of life is said to be the finding of a happiness that is not enjoyed at the expense of others, and surely this class have solved that Sphinx's riddle, for they float through their days in a dream of complacency disturbed neither by corroding doubt nor harassed by jealousies.

Whole families of feeble-minded people, on the strength of an ancestor who achieved distinction a hundred years ago, live in constant thanksgiving that they "are not as other men." None of the great man's descendants have done anything to be particularly proud of since their remote progenitor signed the Declaration of Independence or governed a colony. They have vegetated in small provincial cities and intermarried into other equally fortunate families, but the sense of superiority is ever present to sustain them, under straitened circumstances and diminishing prestige. The world may move on around them, but they never advance. Why should they? They have reached perfection. The brains and enterprise that have revolutionized our age knock in vain at their doors. They belong to that vast "majority that is always in the wrong," being so pleased with themselves, their

ways, and their feeble little lines of thought, that any change or advancement gives their system a shock.

A painter I know, was once importuned for a sketch by a lady of this class. After many delays and renewed demands he presented her one day, when she and some friends were visiting his studio, with a delightful open-air study simply framed. She seemed confused at the offering, to his astonishment, as she had not lacked *aplomb* in asking for the sketch. After much blushing and fumbling she succeeded in getting the painting loose, and handing back the frame, remarked:

"I will take the painting, but you must keep the frame. My husband would never allow me to accept anything of value from you!"—and smiled on the speechless painter, doubtless charmed with her own tact.

Complacent people are the same drag on a society that a brake would be to a coach going up hill. They are the "eternal negative" and would extinguish, if they could, any light stronger than that to which their weak eyes have been accustomed. They look with astonishment and distrust at any one trying to break away from their tiresome old ways and habits, and wonder why all the world is not as pleased with their personalities as they are themselves, suggesting, if you are willing to waste your time listening to their twaddle, that there is something radically wrong in any innovation, that both "Church and

State" will be imperilled if things are altered. No blight, no mildew is more fatal to a plant than the "complacent" are to the world. They resent any progress and are offended if you mention before them any new standards or points of view. "What has been good enough for us and our parents should certainly be satisfactory to the younger generations." It seems to the contented like pure presumption on the part of their acquaintances to wander after strange gods, in the shape of new ideals, higher standards of culture, or a perfected refinement of surroundings.

We are perhaps wrong to pity complacent people. It is for another class our sympathy should be kept; for those who cannot refrain from doubting of themselves and the value of their work—those unfortunate gifted and artistic spirits who descend too often the *via dolorosa* of discontent and despair, who have a higher ideal than their neighbors, and, in struggling after an unattainable perfection, fall by the wayside.

No. 7

The Discontent of Talent

THE complacency that buoys up self-sufficient souls, soothing them with the illusion that they themselves, their towns, country, language, and habits are above improvement, causing them to shudder, as at a sacrilege, if any changes are suggested, is fortunately limited to a class of stay-at-home nonentities. In proportion as it is common among them, is it rare or delightfully absent in any society of gifted or imaginative people.

Among our globe-trotting compatriots this defect is much less general than in the older nations of the world, for the excellent reason, that the moment a man travels or takes the trouble to know people of different nationalities, his armor of complacency receives so severe a blow, that it is shattered forever, the wanderer returning home wiser and much more modest. There seems to be something fatal to conceit in the air of great centres; professionally or in general society a man so soon finds his level.

The "great world" may foster other faults; human nature is sure to develop some in every walk of life. Smug contentment, however, disappears in its rarefied atmosphere, giving place to a craving for improvement, a nervous alert-

ness that keeps the mind from stagnating and urges it on to do its best.

It is never the beautiful woman who sits down in smiling serenity before her mirror. She is tireless in her efforts to enhance her beauty and set it off to the best advantage. Her figure is never slender enough, nor her carriage sufficiently erect to satisfy. But the "frump" will let herself and all her surroundings go to seed, not from humbleness of mind or an overwhelming sense of her own unworthiness, but in pure complacent conceit.

A criticism to which the highly gifted lay themselves open from those who do not understand them, is their love of praise, the critics failing to grasp the fact that this passion for measuring one's self with others, like the gad-fly pursuing poor Io, never allows a moment's repose in the green pastures of success, but goads them constantly up the rocky sides of endeavor. It is not that they love flattery, but that they need approbation as a counterpoise to the dark moments of self-abasement and as a sustaining aid for higher flights.

Many years ago I was present at a final sitting which my master, Carolus Duran, gave to one of my fair compatriots. He knew that the lady was leaving Paris on the morrow, and that in an hour, her husband and his friends were coming to see and criticise the portrait—always a terrible ordeal for an artist.

To any one familiar with this painter's moods, it was evident that the result of the sitting was not entirely satisfactory. The quick breathing, the impatient tapping movement of the foot, the swift backward springs to obtain a better view, so characteristic of him in moments of doubt, and which had twenty years before earned him the name of *le danseur* from his fellow-copyists at the Louvre, betrayed to even a casual observer that his discouragement and discontent were at boiling point.

The sound of a bell and a murmur of voices announced the entrance of the visitors into the vast studio. After the formalities of introduction had been accomplished the new-comers glanced at the portrait, but uttered never a word. From it they passed in a perfectly casual manner to an inspection of the beautiful contents of the room, investigating the tapestries, admiring the armor, and finally, after another glance at the portrait, the husband remarked: "You have given my wife a jolly long neck, haven't you?" and, turning to his friends, began laughing and chatting in English.

If vitriol had been thrown on my poor master's quivering frame, the effect could not have been more instantaneous, his ignorance of the language spoken doubtless exaggerating his impression of being ridiculed. Suddenly he turned very white, and before any of us had divined his intention he had seized a Japanese sword lying

by and cut a dozen gashes across the canvas. Then, dropping his weapon, he flung out of the room, leaving his sitter and her friends in speechless consternation, to wonder then and ever after in what way they had offended him. In their opinions, if a man had talent and understood his business, he should produce portraits with the same ease that he would answer dinner invitations, and if they paid for, they were in no way bound also to praise, his work. They were entirely pleased with the result, but did not consider it necessary to tell him so, no idea having crossed their minds that he might be in one of those moods so frequent with artistic natures, when words of approbation and praise are as necessary to them, as the air we breathe is to us, mortals of a commoner clay.

Even in the theatrical and operatic professions, those hotbeds of conceit, you will generally find among the "stars" abysmal depths of discouragement and despair. One great tenor, who has delighted New York audiences during several winters past, invariably announces to his intimates on arising that his "voice has gone," and that, in consequence he will "never sing again," and has to be caressed and cajoled back into some semblance of confidence before attempting a performance. This same artist, with an almost limitless repertoire and a reputation no new successes could enhance, recently risked all to sing what he considered a higher class of music, in-

finitely more fatiguing to his voice, because he was impelled onward by the ideal that forces genius to constant improvement and development of its powers.

What the people who meet these artists occasionally at a private concert or behind the scenes during the intense strain of a representation, take too readily for monumental egoism and conceit, is, the greater part of the time, merely the desire for a sustaining word, a longing for the stimulant of praise.

All actors and singers are but big children, and must be humored and petted like children when you wish them to do their best. It is necessary for them to feel in touch with their audiences; to be assured that they are not falling below the high ideals formed for their work.

Some winters ago a performance at the opera nearly came to a standstill because an all-conquering soprano was found crying in her dressing-room. After many weary moments of consolation and questioning, it came out that she felt quite sure she no longer had any talent. One of the other singers had laughed at her voice, and in consequence there was nothing left to live for. A half-hour later, owing to judicious "treatment," she was singing gloriously and bowing her thanks to thunders of applause.

Rather than blame this divine discontent that has made man what he is to-day, let us glorify and envy it, pitying the while the frail mortal

vessels it consumes with its flame. No adulation can turn such natures from their goal, and in the hour of triumph the slave is always at their side to whisper the word of warning. This discontent is the leaven that has raised the whole loaf of dull humanity to better things and higher efforts, those privileged to feel it are the suns that illuminate our system. If on these luminaries observers have discovered spots, it is well to remember that these blemishes are but the defects of their qualities, and better far than the total eclipse that shrouds so large a part of humanity in colorless complacency.

It will never be known how many masterpieces have been lost to the world because at the critical moment a friend has not been at hand with the stimulant of sympathy and encouragement needed by an overworked, straining artist who was beginning to lose confidence in himself; to soothe his irritated nerves with the balm of praise, and take his poor aching head on a friendly shoulder and let him sob out there all his doubt and discouragement.

So let us not be niggardly or ungenerous in meting out to struggling fellow-beings their share, and perchance a little more than their share of approbation and applause, poor enough return, after all, for the pleasure their labors have procured us. What adequate compensation can we mete out to an author for the hours of delight and self-forgetfulness his talent has brought

to us in moments of loneliness, illness, or grief? What can pay our debt to a painter who has fixed on canvas the face we love?

The little return that it is in our power to make for all the joy these gifted fellow-beings bring into our lives is (closing our eyes to minor imperfections) to warmly applaud them as they move upward, along their stony path.

No. 8

Slouch

I SHOULD like to see, in every schoolroom of our growing country, in every business office, at the railway stations, and on street corners, large placards placed with "Do not slouch" printed thereon in distinct and imposing characters. If ever there was a tendency that needed nipping in the bud (I fear the bud is fast becoming a full-blown flower), it is this discouraging national failing.

Each year when I return from my spring wanderings, among the benighted and effete nations of the Old World, on whom the untravelled American looks down from the height of his superiority, I am struck anew by the contrast between the trim, well-groomed officials left behind on one side of the ocean and the happy-go-lucky, slouching individuals I find on the other.

As I ride up town this unpleasant impression deepens. In the "little Mother Isle" I have just left, bus-drivers have quite a coaching air, with hat and coat of knowing form. They sport flowers in their button-holes and salute other bus-drivers, when they meet, with a twist of whip and elbow refreshingly correct, showing that they take pride in their calling, and have been at some pains to turn themselves out as

smart in appearance as finances would allow.

Here, on the contrary, the stage and cab drivers I meet seem to be under a blight, and to have lost all interest in life. They lounge on the box, their legs straggling aimlessly, one hand holding the reins, the other hanging dejectedly by the side. Yet there is little doubt that these heartbroken citizens are earning double what their London *confrères* gain. The shadow of the national peculiarity is over them.

When I get to my rooms, the elevator boy is reclining in the lift, and hardly raises his eye-lids as he languidly manœuvres the rope. I have seen that boy now for months, but never when his boots and clothes were brushed or when his cravat was not riding proudly above his collar. On occasions I have offered him pins, which he took wearily, doubtless because it was less trouble than to refuse. The next day, however, his cravat again rode triumphant, mocking my efforts to keep it in its place. His hair, too, has been a cause of wonder to me. How does he manage to have it always so long and so unkempt? More than once, when expecting callers, I have bribed him to have it cut, but it seemed to grow in the night, back to its poetic profusion.

In what does this noble disregard for appearances which characterizes American men originate? Our climate, as some suggest, or discouragement at not all being millionaires? It more

likely comes from an absence with us of the military training that abroad goes so far toward licking young men into shape.

I shall never forget the surprise on the face of a French statesman to whom I once expressed my sympathy for his country, laboring under the burden of so vast a standing army. He answered:

"The financial burden is doubtless great; but you have others. Witness your pension expenditures. With us the money drawn from the people is used in such a way as to be of inestimable value to them. We take the young hobbledehoy farm-hand or mechanic, ignorant, mannerless, uncleanly as he may be, and turn him out at the end of three years with his regiment, self-respecting and well-mannered, with habits of cleanliness and obedience, having acquired a bearing, and a love of order that will cling to and serve him all his life. We do not go so far," he added, "as our English neighbors in drilling men into superb manikins of 'form' and carriage. Our authorities do not consider it necessary. But we reclaim youths from the slovenliness of their native village or workshop and make them tidy and mannerly citizens."

These remarks came to mind the other day as I watched a group of New England youths lounging on the steps of the village store, or sitting in rows on a neighboring fence, until I longed to try if even a judicial arrangement of

tacks, 'business-end up,' on these favorite seats would infuse any energy into their movements. I came to the conclusion that my French acquaintance was right, for the only trim-looking men to be seen, were either veterans of our war or youths belonging to the local militia. And nowhere does one see finer specimens of humanity than West Point and Annapolis turn out.

If any one doubts what kind of men slouching youths develop into, let him look when he travels, at the dejected appearance of the farmhouses throughout our land. Surely our rural populations are not so much poorer than those of other countries. Yet when one compares the dreary homes of even our well-to-do farmers with the smiling, well-kept hamlets seen in England or on the Continent, such would seem to be the case.

If ours were an old and bankrupt nation, this air of discouragement and decay could not be greater. Outside of the big cities one looks in vain for some sign of American dash and enterprise in the appearance of our men and their homes.

During a journey of over four thousand miles, made last spring as the guest of a gentleman who knows our country thoroughly, I was impressed most painfully with this abject air. Never in all those days did we see a fruit-tree trained on some sunny southern wall, a smiling flower-garden or carefully clipped hedge. My host told me that hardly the necessary vegetables are grown, the

inhabitants of the West and South preferring canned food. It is less trouble!

If you wish to form an idea of the extent to which slouch prevails in our country, try to start a "village improvement society," and experience, as others have done, the apathy and ill-will of the inhabitants when you go about among them and strive to summon some of their local pride to your aid.

In the town near which I pass my summers, a large stone, fallen from a passing dray, lay for days in the middle of the principal street, until I paid some boys to remove it. No one cared, and the dull-eyed inhabitants would doubtless be looking at it still but for my impatience.

One would imagine the villagers were all on the point of moving away (and they generally are, if they can sell their land), so little interest do they show in your plans. Like all people who have fallen into bad habits, they have grown to love their slatternly ways and cling to them, resenting furiously any attempt to shake them up to energy and reform.

The farmer has not, however, a monopoly. Slouch seems ubiquitous. Our railway and steamboat systems have tried in vain to combat it, and supplied their employees with a livery (I beg the free and independent voter's pardon, a uniform!), with but little effect. The inherent tendency is too strong for the corporations. The conductors still shuffle along in their spotted

garments, the cap on the back of the head, and their legs anywhere, while they chew gum in defiance of the whole Board of Directors.

Go down to Washington, after a visit to the Houses of Parliament or the Chamber of Deputies, and observe the contrast between the bearing of our Senators and Representatives and the air of their *confrères* abroad. Our law-makers seem trying to avoid every appearance of "smartness." Indeed, I am told, so great is the prejudice in the United States against a well-turned-out man that a candidate would seriously compromise his chances of election who appeared before his constituents in other than the accustomed shabby frock-coat, unbuttoned and floating, a pot hat, no gloves, as much doubtfully white shirt-front as possible, and a wisp of black silk for a tie; and if he can exhibit also a chin-whisker, his chances of election are materially increased.

Nothing offends an eye accustomed to our native *laisser aller* so much as a well-brushed hat and shining boots. When abroad, it is easy to spot a compatriot as soon and as far as you can see one, by his graceless gait, a cross between a lounge and a shuffle. In reading-, or dining-room, he is the only man whose spine does not seem equal to its work, so he flops and straggles until, for the honor of your land, you long to shake him and set him squarely on his legs.

No amount of reasoning can convince me that outward slovenliness is not a sign of inward and

moral supineness. A neglected exterior generally means a lax moral code. The man who considers it too much trouble to sit erect can hardly have given much time to his tub or his toilet. Having neglected his clothes, he will neglect his manners, and between morals and manners we know the tie is intimate.

In the Orient a new reign is often inaugurated by the construction of a mosque. Vast expense is incurred to make it as splendid as possible. But, once completed, it is never touched again. Others are built by succeeding sovereigns, but neither thought nor treasure is ever expended on the old ones. When they can no longer be used, they are abandoned, and fall into decay. The same system seems to prevail among our private owners and corporations. Streets are paved, lamp-posts erected, store-fronts carefully adorned, but from the hour the workman puts his finishing touch upon them they are abandoned to the hand of fate. The mud may cake up knee-deep, wind and weather work their own sweet will, it is no one's business to interfere.

When abroad one of my amusements has been of an early morning to watch Paris making its toilet. The streets are taking a bath, liveried attendants are blacking the boots of the lamp-posts and newspaper-*kiosques*, the shop-fronts are being shaved and having their hair curled, cafés and restaurants are putting on clean shirts and tying their cravats smartly before their many mir-

rors. By the time the world is up and about, the whole city, smiling freshly from its matutinal tub, is ready to greet it gayly.

It is this attention to detail that gives to Continental cities their air of cheerfulness and thrift, and the utter lack of it that impresses foreigners so painfully on arriving at our shores.

It has been the fashion to laugh at the dude and his high collar, at the darky in his master's cast-off clothes, aping style and fashion. Better the dude, better the colored dandy, better even the Bowery "tough" with his affected carriage, for they at least are reaching blindly out after something better than their surroundings, striving after an ideal, and are in just so much the superiors of the foolish souls who mock them—better, even misguided efforts, than the ignoble stagnant quagmire of slouch into which we seem to be slowly descending.

No. 9

Social Suggestion

THE question of how far we are unconsciously influenced by people and surroundings, in our likes and dislikes, our opinions, and even in our pleasures and intimate tastes, is a delicate and interesting one, for the line between success and failure in the world, as on the stage or in most of the professions, is so narrow and depends so often on what humor one's "public" happen to be in at a particular moment, that the subject is worthy of consideration.

Has it never happened to you, for instance, to dine with friends and go afterwards in a jolly humor to the play which proved so delightful that you insist on taking your family immediately to see it; when to your astonishment you discover that it is neither clever nor amusing, on the contrary rather dull. Your family look at you in amazement and wonder what you had seen to admire in such an asinine performance. There was a case of suggestion! You had been influenced by your friends and had shared their opinions. The same thing occurs on a higher scale when one is raised out of one's self by association with gifted and original people, a communion with more cultivated natures which causes you to discover and appreciate a thou-

sand hidden beauties in literature, art or music that left to yourself, you would have failed to notice. Under these circumstances you will often be astonished at the point and piquancy of your own conversation. This is but too true of a number of subjects.

We fondly believe our opinions and convictions to be original, and with innocent conceit, imagine that we have formed them for ourselves. The illusion of being unlike other people is a common vanity. Beware of the man who asserts such a claim. He is sure to be a bore and will serve up to you, as his own, a muddle of ideas and opinions which he has absorbed like a sponge from his surroundings.

No place is more propitious for studying this curious phenomenon, than behind the scenes of a theatre, the last few nights before a first performance. The whole company is keyed up to a point of mutual admiration that they are far from feeling generally. "The piece is charming and sure to be a success." The author and the interpreters of his thoughts are in complete communion. The first night comes. The piece is a failure! Drop into the greenroom then and you will find an astonishing change has taken place. The Star will take you into a corner and assert that, she "always knew the thing could not go, it was too imbecile, with such a company, it was folly to expect anything else." The author will abuse the Star and the management. The whole troupe

is frankly disconcerted, like people aroused out of a hypnotic sleep, wondering what they had seen in the play to admire.

In the social world we are even more inconsistent, accepting with tameness the most astonishing theories and opinions. Whole circles will go on assuring each other how clever Miss So-and-So is, or, how beautiful they think someone else. Not because these good people are any cleverer, or more attractive than their neighbors, but simply because it is in the air to have these opinions about them. To such an extent does this hold good, that certain persons are privileged to be vulgar and rude, to say impertinent things and make remarks that would ostracize a less fortunate individual from the polite world for ever; society will only smilingly shrug its shoulders and say: "It is only Mr. So-and-So's way." It is useless to assert that in cases like these, people are in possession of their normal senses. They are under influences of which they are perfectly unconscious.

Have you ever seen a piece guyed? Few sadder sights exist, the human being rarely getting nearer the brute than when engaged in this amusement. Nothing the actor or actress can do will satisfy the public. Men who under ordinary circumstances would be incapable of insulting a woman, will whistle and stamp and laugh, at an unfortunate girl who is doing her utmost to amuse them. A terrible example of

this was given two winters ago at one of our concert halls, when a family of Western singers were subjected to absolute ill-treatment at the hands of the public. The young girls were perfectly sincere, in their rude way, but this did not prevent men from offering them every insult malice could devise, and making them a target for every missile at hand. So little does the public think for itself in cases like this, that at the opening of the performance had some well-known person given the signal for applause, the whole audience would, in all probability, have been delighted and made the wretched sisters a success.

In my youth it was the fashion to affect admiration for the Italian school of painting and especially for the great masters of the Renaissance. Whole families of perfectly inartistic English and Americans might then be heard conscientiously admiring the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel or Leonardo's Last Supper (Botticelli had not been invented then) in the choicest guide-book language.

When one considers the infinite knowledge of technique required to understand the difficulties overcome by the giants of the Renaissance and to appreciate the intrinsic qualities of their creations, one asks one's self in wonder what our parents admired in those paintings, and what tempted them to bring home and adorn their houses with such dreadful copies of their favorites.

For if they appreciated the originals they never would have bought the copies, and if the copies pleased them, they must have been incapable of enjoying the originals. Yet all these people thought themselves perfectly sincere. To-day you will see the same thing going on before the paintings of Claude Monet and Besnard, the same admiration expressed by people who, you feel perfectly sure, do not realize why these works of art are superior and can no more explain to you why they think as they do than the sheep that follow each other through a hole in a wall, can give a reason for their actions.

Dress and fashion in clothes are subjects above all others, where the ineptitude of the human mind is most evident. Can it be explained in any other way, why the fashions of yesterday always appear so hideous to us,—almost grotesque? Take up an old album of photographs and glance over the faded contents. Was there ever anything so absurd? Look at the top hats men wore, and at the skirts of the women!

The mother of a family said to me the other day: "When I recall the way in which girls were dressed in my youth, I wonder how any of us ever got a husband."

Study a photograph of the Empress Eugénie, that supreme arbiter of elegance and grace. Oh! those bunchy hooped skirts! That awful India shawl pinned off the shoulders, and the

bonnet perched on a roll of hair in the nape of the neck! What were people thinking of at that time? Were they lunatics to deform in this way the beautiful lines of the human body which it should be the first object of toilet to enhance, or were they only lacking in the artistic sense? Nothing of the kind. And what is more, they were convinced that the real secret of beauty in dress had been discovered by them; that past fashions were absurd, and that the future could not improve on their creations. The sculptors and painters of that day (men of as great talent as any now living), were enthusiastic in reproducing those monstrosities in marble or on canvas, and authors raved about the ideal grace with which a certain beauty draped her shawl.

Another marked manner in which we are influenced by circumambient suggestion, is in the transient furore certain games and pastimes create. We see intelligent people so given over to this influence as barely to allow themselves time to eat and sleep, begrudging the hours thus stolen from their favorite amusement.

Ten years ago, tennis occupied every moment of our young people's time; now golf has transplanted tennis in public favor, which does not prove, however, that the latter is the better game, but simply that compelled by the accumulated force of other people's opinions, youths and maidens, old duffers and mature spinsters are willing to pass many hours daily in all kinds of

weather, solemnly following an indian-rubber ball across ten-acre lots.

If you suggest to people who are laboring under the illusion they are amusing themselves that the game, absorbing so much of their attention, is not as exciting as tennis nor as clever in combinations as croquet, that in fact it would be quite as amusing to roll an empty barrel several times around a plowed field, they laugh at you in derision and instantly put you down in their profound minds as a man who does not understand "sport."

Yet these very people were tennis-mad twenty years ago and had night come to interrupt a game of croquet would have ordered lanterns lighted in order to finish the match so enthralling were its intricacies.

Everybody has known how to play *Bézique* in this country for years, yet within the last eighteen months, whole circles of our friends have been seized with a midsummer madness and willingly sat glued to a card-table through long hot afternoons and again after dinner until day dawned on their folly.

Certain *Mémoires* of Louis Fifteenth's reign tell of an "unravelling" mania that developed at his court. It began by some people fraying out old silks to obtain the gold and silver threads from worn-out stuffs; this occupation soon became the rage, nothing could restrain the delirium of destruction, great ladies tore priceless

tapestries from their walls and brocades from their furniture, in order to unravel those materials and as the old stock did not suffice for the demand thousands were spent on new brocades and velvets, which were instantly destroyed, entertainments were given where unravelling was the only amusement offered, the entire court thinking and talking of nothing else for months.

What is the logical deduction to be drawn from all this? Simply that people do not see with their eyes or judge with their understandings; that an all-pervading hypnotism, an ambient suggestion, at times envelops us taking from people all free will, and replacing it with the taste and judgment of the moment.

The number of people is small in each generation, who are strong enough to rise above their surroundings and think for themselves. The rest are as dry leaves on a stream. They float along and turn gayly in the eddies, convinced all the time (as perhaps are the leaves) that they act entirely from their own volition and that their movements are having a profound influence on the direction and force of the current.

No. 10

Bohemia

LUNCHING with a talented English comedian and his wife the other day, the conversation turned on Bohemia, the evasive no-man's-land that Thackeray referred to, in so many of his books, and to which he looked back lovingly in his later years, when, as he said, he had forgotten the road to Prague.

The lady remarked: "People have been more than kind to us here in New York. We have dined and supped out constantly, and have met with gracious kindness, such as we can never forget. But so far we have not met a single painter, or author, or sculptor, or a man who has explored a corner of the earth. Neither have we had the good luck to find ourselves in the same room with Tesla or Rehan, Edison or Drew. We shall regret so much when back in England and are asked about your people of talent, being obliged to say, 'We never met any of them.' Why is it? We have not been in any one circle, and have pitched our tents in many cities, during our tours over here, but always with the same result. We read your American authors as much as, if not more than, our own. The names of dozens of your discoverers and painters are household words in England. When my husband planned his first tour over here my one idea was,

'How nice it will be! Now I shall meet those delightful people of whom I have heard so much.' The disappointment has been complete. Never one have I seen."

I could not but feel how all too true were the remarks of this intelligent visitor, remembering how quick the society of London is to welcome a new celebrity or original character, how a place is at once made for him at every hospitable board, a permanent one to which he is expected to return; and how no Continental entertainment is considered complete without some bright particular star to shine in the firmament.

"Lion-hunting," I hear my reader say with a sneer. That may be, but it makes society worth the candle, which it rarely is over here. I realized what I had often vaguely felt before, that the Bohemia the English lady was looking for was not to be found in this country, more's the pity. Not that the elements are lacking. Far from it, (for even more than in London should we be able to combine such a society), but perhaps from a misconception of the true idea of such a society, due probably to Henry Murger's dreary book *Scènes de la vie de Bohême* which is chargeable with the fact that a circle of this kind evokes in the mind of most Americans visions of a scrubby, poorly-fed and less-washed community, a world they would hardly dare ask to their tables for fear of some embarrassing unconventionality of conduct or dress.

Yet that can hardly be the reason, for even in Murger or Paul de Kock, at their worst, the hero is still a gentleman, and even when he borrows a friend's coat, it is to go to a great house and among people of rank. Besides, we are becoming too cosmopolitan, and wander too constantly over this little globe, not to have learned that the Bohemia of 1830 is as completely a thing of the past as a *grisette* or a glyphisodon. It disappeared with Gavarni and the authors who described it. Although we have kept the word, its meaning has gradually changed until it has come to mean something difficult to define, a will-o'-the-wisp, which one tries vainly to grasp. With each decade it has put on a new form and changed its centre, the one definite fact being that it combines the better elements of several social layers.

Drop in, if you are in Paris and know the way, at one of Madeleine Lemaire's informal evenings in her studio. There you may find the Prince de Ligne, chatting with Réjane or Coquelin; or Henri d'Orléans, just back from an expedition into Africa. A little further on, Saint-Saens will be running over the keys, preparing an accompaniment for one of Madame de Trédern's songs. The Princess Mathilde (that passionate lover of art) will surely be there, and—but it is needless to particularize.

Cross the Channel, and get yourself asked to one of Irving's choice suppers after the play.

You will find the bar, the stage, and the pulpit represented there, a "happy family" over which the "Prince" often presides, smoking cigar after cigar, until the tardy London daylight appears to break up the entertainment.

For both are centres where the gifted and the travelled meet the great of the social world, on a footing of perfect equality, and where, if any prestige is accorded, it is that of brains. When you have seen these places and a dozen others like them, you will realize what the actor's wife had in her mind.

Now, let me whisper to you why I think such circles do not exist in this country. In the first place, we are still too provincial in this big city of ours. New York always reminds me of a definition I once heard of California fruit: "Very large, with no particular flavor." We are like a boy, who has had the misfortune to grow too quickly and look like a man, but whose mind has not kept pace with his body. What he knows is undigested and chaotic, while his appearance makes you expect more of him than he can give—hence disappointment.

Our society is yet in knickerbockers, and has retained all sorts of littlenesses and prejudices which older civilizations have long since relegated to the mental lumber room. An equivalent to this point of view you will find in England or France only in the smaller "cathedral" cities, and even there the old aristocrats have the cour-

age of their opinions. Here, where everything is quite frankly on a money basis, and "positions" are made and lost like a fortune, by a turn of the market, those qualities which are purely mental, and on which it is hard to put a practical value, are naturally at a discount. We are quite ready to pay for the best. Witness our private galleries and the opera, but we say, like the parvenu in Émile Augier's delightful comedy *Le Gendre de M. Poirier*, "Patronize art? Of course! But the artists? Never!" And frankly, it would be too much, would it not, to expect a family only half a generation away from an iron foundry, or a mine, to be willing to receive Irving or Bernhardt on terms of perfect equality?

As it would be unjust to demand a mature mind in the overgrown boy, it is useless to hope for delicate tact and social feeling from the parvenu. To be gracious and at ease with all classes and professions, one must be perfectly sure of one's own position, and with us few feel this security, it being based on too frail a foundation, a crisis in the "street" going a long way towards destroying it.

Of course I am generalizing and doubt not that in many cultivated homes the right spirit exists, but unfortunately these are not the centres which give the tone to our "world." Lately at one of the most splendid houses in this city a young Italian tenor had been engaged to sing. When he had finished he stood alone, unno-

ticed, unspoken to for the rest of the evening. He had been paid to sing. "What more, in common sense, could he want?" thought the "world," without reflecting that it was probably not the *tenor* who lost by that arrangement. It needs a delicate hand to hold the reins over the backs of such a fine-mouthed community as artists and singers form. They rarely give their best when singing or performing in a hostile atmosphere.

A few years ago when a fancy-dress ball was given at the Academy of Design, the original idea was to have it an artists' ball; the community of the brush were, however, approached with such a complete lack of tact that, with hardly an exception, they held aloof, and at the ball shone conspicuous by their absence.

At present in this city I know of but two hospitable firesides where you are sure to meet the best the city holds of either foreign or native talent. The one is presided over by the wife of a young composer, and the other, oddly enough, by two unmarried ladies. An invitation to a dinner or a supper at either of these houses is as eagerly sought after and as highly prized in the great world as it is by the Bohemians, though neither "salon" is open regularly.

There is still hope for us, and I already see signs of better things. Perhaps, when my English friend returns in a few years, we may be able to prove to her that we have found the road to Prague.

No. 11

Social Exiles

BALZAC, in his *Comédie Humaine*, has reviewed with a master-hand almost every phase of the Social World of Paris down to 1850 and Thackeray left hardly a corner of London High Life unexplored; but so great have been the changes (progress, its admirers call it,) since then, that, could Balzac come back to his beloved Paris, he would feel like a foreigner there; and Thackeray, who was among us but yesterday, would have difficulty in finding his bearings in the sea of the London world of to-day.

We have changed so radically that even a casual observer cannot help being struck by the difference. Among other most significant "phenomena" has appeared a phase of life that not only neither of these great men observed (for the very good reason that it had not appeared in their time), but which seems also to have escaped the notice of the writers of our own day, close observers as they are of any new development. I mean the class of Social Exiles, pitiable wanderers from home and country, who haunt the Continent, and are to be found (sad little colonies) in out-of-the-way corners of almost every civilized country.

To know much of this form of modern life, one must have been a wanderer, like myself, and have pitched his tent in many queer places; for they are shy game and not easily raised, frequenting mostly quiet old cities like Versailles and Florence, or inexpensive watering-places where their meagre incomes become affluence by contrast. The first thought on dropping in on such a settlement is, "How in the world did these people ever drift here?" It is simple enough and generally comes about in this way:

The father of a wealthy family dies. The fortune turns out to be less than was expected. The widow and children decide to go abroad for a year or so, during their period of mourning, partially for distraction, and partially (a fact which is not spoken of) because at home they would be forced to change their way of living to a simpler one, and that is hard to do, just at first. Later they think it will be quite easy. So the family emigrates, and after a little sight-seeing, settles in Dresden or Tours, casually at first, in a hotel. If there are young children they are made the excuse. "The languages are so important!" Or else one of the daughters develops a taste for music, or a son takes up the study of art. In a year or two, before a furnished apartment is taken, the idea of returning is discussed, but abandoned "for the present." They begin vaguely to realize how difficult it will be to take life up again at home. During all this time

their income (like everything else when the owners are absent) has been slowly but surely disappearing, making the return each year more difficult. Finally, for economy, an unfurnished apartment is taken. They send home for bits of furniture and family belongings, and gradually drop into the great army of the expatriated.

Oh, the pathos of it! One who has not seen these poor stranded waifs in their self-imposed exile, with eyes turned towards their native land, cannot realize all the sadness and loneliness they endure, rarely adopting the country of their residence but becoming more firmly American as the years go by. The home papers and periodicals are taken, the American church attended, if there happens to be one; the English chapel, if there is not. Never a French church! In their hearts they think it almost irreverent to read the service in French. The acquaintance of a few fellow-exiles is made and that of a half-dozen English families, mothers and daughters and a younger son or two, whom the ferocious primogeniture custom has cast out of the homes of their childhood to economize on the Continent.

I have in my mind a little settlement of this kind at Versailles, which was a type. The formal old city, fallen from its grandeur, was a singularly appropriate setting to the little comedy. There the modest purses of the exiles found rents within their reach, the quarters vast and

airy. The galleries and the park afforded a diversion, and then Paris, dear Paris, the American Mecca, was within reach. At the time I knew it, the colony was fairly prosperous, many of its members living in the two or three principal *pensions*, the others in apartments of their own. They gave feeble little entertainments among themselves, card-parties and teas, and dined about with each other at their respective *tables d'hôte*, even knowing a stray Frenchman or two, whom the quest of a meal had tempted out of their native fastnesses as it does the wolves in a hard winter. Writing and receiving letters from America was one of the principal occupations, and an epistle descriptive of a particular event at home went the rounds, and was eagerly read and discussed.

The merits of the different *pensions* also formed a subject of vital interest. The advantages and disadvantages of these rival establishments were, as a topic, never exhausted. *Madame une telle* gave five o'clock tea, included in the seven francs a day, but her rival gave one more meat course at dinner and her coffee was certainly better, while a third undoubtedly had a nicer set of people. No one here at home can realize the importance these matters gradually assume in the eyes of the exiles. Their slender incomes have to be so carefully handled to meet the strain of even this simple way of living, if they are to show a surplus for a little trip to the seashore in the sum-

mer months, that an extra franc a day becomes a serious consideration.

Every now and then a family stronger-minded than the others, or with serious reasons for returning home (a daughter to bring out or a son to put into business), would break away from its somnolent surroundings and re-cross the Atlantic, alternating between hope and fear. It is here that a sad fate awaits these modern Rip Van Winkles. They find their native cities changed beyond recognition. (For we move fast in these days.) The mother gets out her visiting list of ten years before and is thunderstruck to find that it contains chiefly names of the "dead, the divorced, and defaulted." The waves of a decade have washed over her place and the world she once belonged to knows her no more. The leaders of her day on whose aid she counted have retired from the fray. Younger, and alas! unknown faces sit in the opera boxes and around the dinner tables where before she had found only friends. After a feeble little struggle to get again into the "swim," the family drifts back across the ocean into the quiet back water of a continental town, and goes circling around with the other twigs and dry leaves, moral flotsam and jetsam, thrown aside by the great rush of the outside world.

For the parents the life is not too sad. They have had their day, and are, perhaps, a little glad in their hearts of a quiet old age, away from the

heat and sweat of the battle; but for the younger generation it is annihilation. Each year their circle grows smaller. Death takes away one member after another of the family, until one is left alone in a foreign land with no ties around her, or with her far-away "home," the latter more a name now than a reality.

A year or two ago I was taking luncheon with our consul at his primitive villa, an hour's ride from the city of Tangier, a ride made on donkey-back, as no roads exist in that sunny land. After our coffee and cigars, he took me a half-hour's walk into the wilderness around him to call on his nearest neighbors, whose mode of existence seemed a source of anxiety to him. I found myself in the presence of two American ladies, the younger being certainly not less than seventy-five. To my astonishment I found they had been living there some thirty years, since the death of their parents, in an isolation and remoteness impossible to describe, in an Arab house, with native servants, "the world forgetting, by the world forgot." Yet these ladies had names well known in New York fifty years ago.

The glimpse I had of their existence made me thoughtful as I rode home in the twilight, across a suburb none too safe for strangers. What had the future in store for those two? Or, worse still, for the survivor of those two? In contrast, I saw a certain humble "home" far away in America, where two old ladies were ending their lives

surrounded by loving friends and relations, honored and cherished and guarded tenderly from the rude world.

In big cities like Paris and Rome there is another class of the expatriated, the wealthy who have left their homes in a moment of pique after the failure of some social or political ambition; and who find in these centres the recognition refused them at home and for which their souls thirsted.

It is not to these I refer, although it is curious to see a group of people living for years in a country of which they, half the time, do not speak the language (beyond the necessities of housekeeping and shopping), knowing but few of its inhabitants, and seeing none of the society of the place, their acquaintance rarely going beyond that equivocal, hybrid class that surrounds rich "strangers" and hangs on to the outer edge of the *grand monde*. One feels for this latter class merely contempt, but one's pity is reserved for the former. What object lessons some lives on the Continent would be to impatient souls at home, who feel discontented with their surroundings, and anxious to break away and wander abroad! Let them think twice before they cut the thousand ties it has taken a lifetime to form. Better monotony at your own fireside, my friends, where at the worst, you are known and have your place, no matter how small, than an old age among strangers.

No. 12

"Seven Ages" of Furniture

THE progress through life of active-minded Americans is apt to be a series of transformations. At each succeeding phase of mental development, an old skin drops from their growing intelligence, and they assimilate the ideas and tastes of their new condition, with a facility and completeness unknown to other nations.

One series of metamorphoses particularly amusing to watch is, that of an observant, receptive daughter of Uncle Sam who, aided and followed (at a distance) by an adoring husband, gradually develops her excellent brain, and rises through fathoms of self-culture and purblind experiment, to the surface of dilettantism and connoisseurship. One can generally detect the exact stage of evolution such a lady has reached by the bent of her conversation, the books she is reading, and, last but not least, by her material surroundings; no outward and visible signs reflecting inward and spiritual grace so clearly as the objects people collect around them for the adornment of their rooms, or the way in which those rooms are decorated.

A few years ago, when a young man and his bride set up housekeeping on their own account, the "old people" of both families seized the

opportunity to unload on the beginners (under the pretence of helping them along) a quantity of furniture and belongings that had (as the shopkeepers say) "ceased to please" their original owners. The narrow quarters of the tyros are encumbered by ungainly sofas and arm-chairs, most probably of carved rosewood. *Étagères* of the same lugubrious material grace the corners of their tiny drawing-room, the bits of mirror inserted between the shelves distorting the image of the owners into headless or limbless phantoms. Half of their little dining-room is filled with a black-walnut sideboard, ingeniously contrived to take up as much space as possible and hold nothing, its graceless top adorned with a stag's head carved in wood and imitation antlers.

The novices in their innocence live contented amid their hideous surroundings for a year or two, when the wife enters her second epoch, which, for want of a better word, we will call the Japanese period. The grim furniture gradually disappears under a layer of silk and gauze draperies, the bare walls blossom with paper umbrellas, fans are nailed in groups promiscuously, wherever an empty space offends her eye. Bows of ribbon are attached to every possible protuberance of the furniture. Even the table service is not spared. I remember dining at a house in this stage of its artistic development, where the marrow bones that formed one course

of the dinner appeared each with a coquettish little bow-knot of pink ribbon around its neck.

Once launched on this sea of adornment, the housewife soon loses her bearings and decorates indiscriminately. Her old evening dresses serve to drape the mantelpieces, and she passes every spare hour embroidering, braiding, or fringing some material to adorn her rooms. At Christmas her friends contribute specimens of their handiwork to the collection.

The view of other houses and other decorations before long introduces the worm of discontent into the blossom of our friend's contentment. The fruit of her labors becomes tasteless on her lips. As the finances of the family are satisfactory, the re-arrangement of the parlor floor is (at her suggestion) confided to a firm of upholsterers, who make a clean sweep of the rosewood and the bow-knots, and retire, after some months of labor, leaving the delighted wife in possession of a suite of rooms glittering with every monstrosity that an imaginative tradesman, spurred on by unlimited credit, could devise.

The wood work of the doors and mantels is an intricate puzzle of inlaid woods, the ceilings are panelled and painted in complicated designs. The "parlor" is provided with a complete set of neat, old-gold satin furniture, puffed at its angles with peacock-colored plush.

The monumental folding doors between the

long, narrow rooms are draped with the same chaste combination of stuffs.

The dining-room blazes with a gold and purple wall paper, set off by ebonized wood work and furniture. The conscientious contractor has neglected no corner. Every square inch of the ceilings, walls, and floors has been carved, embossed, stencilled, or gilded into a bewildering monotony.

The husband, whose affairs are rapidly increasing on his hands, has no time to attend to such insignificant details as house decoration, the wife has perfect confidence in the taste of the firm employed. So at the suggestion of the latter, and in order to complete the beauty of the rooms, a Bouguereau, a Toulmouche and a couple of Schreyers are bought, and a number of modern French bronzes scattered about on the multicolored cabinets. Then, at last, the happy owners of all this splendor open their doors to the admiration of their friends.

About the time the peacock plush and the gilding begin to show signs of wear and tear, rumors of a fresh fashion in decoration float across from England, and the new gospel of the beautiful according to Clarence Cook is first preached to an astonished nation.

The fortune of our couple continuing to develop with pleasing rapidity, the building of a country house is next decided upon. A friend of the husband, who has recently started out as an

architect, designs them a picturesque residence without a straight line on its exterior or a square room inside. This house is done up in strict obedience to the teachings of the new sect. The dining-room is made about as cheerful as the entrance to a family vault. The rest of the house bears a close resemblance to an ecclesiastical junk shop. The entrance hall is filled with what appears to be a communion table in solid oak, and the massive chairs and settees of the parlor suggest the withdrawing room of Rowena, æsthetic shades of momie-cloth drape deep-set windows, where anæmic and disjointed females in stained glass pluck conventional roses.

To each of these successive transitions the husband has remained obediently and tranquilly indifferent. He has in his heart considered them all equally unfitting and uncomfortable and sighed in regretful memory of a deep, old-fashioned arm-chair that sheltered his after-dinner naps in the early rosewood period. So far he has been as clay in the hands of his beloved wife, but the anæmic ladies and the communion table are the last drop that causes his cup to overflow. He revolts and begins to take matters into his own hands with the result that the household enters its fifth incarnation under his guidance, during which everything is painted white and all the wall-papers are a vivid scarlet. The family sit on bogus Chippendale and eat off blue and white china.

With the building of their grand new house near the park the couple rise together into the sixth cycle of their development. Having travelled and studied the epochs by this time, they can tell a Louis XIV. from a Louis XV. room, and recognize that mahogany and brass sphinxes denote furniture of the Empire. This newly acquired knowledge is, however, vague and hazy. They have no confidence in themselves, so give over the fitting of their principal floors to the New York branch of a great French house. Little is talked of now but periods, plans, and elevations. Under the guidance of the French firm, they acquire at vast expense, faked reproductions as historic furniture.

The spacious rooms are sticky with new gilding, and the flowered brocades of the hangings and furniture crackle to the touch. The rooms were not designed by the architect to receive any special kind of "treatment." Immense folding-doors unite the salons, and windows open anywhere. The decorations of the walls have been applied like a poultice, regardless of the proportions of the rooms and the distribution of the spaces.

Building and decorating are, however, the best of educations. The husband, freed at last from his business occupations, finds in this new study an interest and a charm unknown to him before. He and his wife are both vaguely disappointed when their resplendent mansion is finished, hav-

ing already outgrown it, and recognize that in spite of correct detail, their costly apartments no more resemble the stately and simple salons seen abroad than the cabin of a Fall River boat resembles the *Galerie des Glaces* at Versailles. The humiliating knowledge that they are all wrong breaks upon them, as it is doing on hundreds of others, at the same time as the desire to know more and appreciate better the perfect productions of this art.

A seventh and last step is before them but they know not how to make it. A surer guide than the upholsterer is, they know, essential, but their library contains nothing to help them. Others possess the information they need, yet they are ignorant where to turn for what they require.

With singular appropriateness a volume treating of this delightful "art" has this season appeared at Scribner's. "The Decoration of Houses" is the result of a woman's faultless taste collaborating with a man's technical knowledge. Its mission is to reveal to the hundreds who have advanced just far enough to find that they can go no farther alone, truths lying concealed beneath the surface. It teaches that consummate taste is satisfied only with a perfected simplicity; that the façades of a house must be the envelope of the rooms within and adapted to them, as the rooms are to the habits and requirements of them "that dwell therein;" that proportion is

the backbone of the decorator's art and that supreme elegance is fitness and moderation; and, above all, that an attention to architectural principles can alone lead decoration to a perfect development.

No. 13

Our Élite and Public Life

THE complaint is so often heard, and seems so well founded, that there is a growing inclination, not only among men of social position, but also among our best and cleverest citizens, to stand aloof from public life, and this reluctance on their part is so unfortunate, that one feels impelled to seek out the causes where they must lie, beneath the surface. At a first glance they are not apparent. Why should not the honor of representing one's town or locality be as eagerly sought after with us as it is by English or French men of position? That such is not the case, however, is evident.

Speaking of this the other evening, over my after-dinner coffee, with a high-minded and public-spirited gentleman, who not long ago represented our country at a European court, he advanced two theories which struck me as being well worth repeating, and which seemed to account to a certain extent for this curious abstinence.

As a first and most important cause, he placed the fact that neither our national nor (here in New York) our state capital coincides with our metropolis. In this we differ from England and all the continental countries. The result is not

difficult to perceive. In London, a man of the world, a business man, or a great lawyer, who represents a locality in Parliament, can fulfil his mandate and at the same time lead his usual life among his own set. The lawyer or the business man can follow during the day his profession, or those affairs on which he depends to support his family and his position in the world. Then, after dinner (owing to the peculiar hours adopted for the sittings of Parliament), he can take his place as a law-maker. If he be a London-born man, he in no way changes his way of life or that of his family. If, on the contrary, he be a county magnate, the change he makes is all for the better, as it takes him and his wife and daughters up to London, the haven of their longings, and the centre of all sorts of social dissipations and advancement.

With us, it is exactly the contrary. As the District of Columbia elects no one, everybody living in Washington officially is more or less expatriated, and the social life it offers is a poor substitute for the circle which most families leave to go there.

That, however, is not the most important side of the question. Go to any great lawyer of either New York or Chicago, and propose sending him to Congress or the Senate. His answer is sure to be, "I cannot afford it. I know it is an honor, but what is to replace the hundred thousand dollars a year which my profession brings

me in, not to mention that all my practice would go to pieces during my absence?" Or again, "How should I dare to propose to my family to leave one of the great centres of the country to go and vegetate in a little provincial city like Washington? No, indeed! Public life is out of the question for me!"

Does any one suppose England would have the class of men she gets in Parliament, if that body sat at Bristol?

Until recently the man who occupied the position of Lord Chancellor made thirty thousand pounds a year by his profession without interfering in any way with his public duties, and at the present moment a recordership in London in no wise prevents private practice. Were these gentlemen Americans, they would be obliged to renounce all hope of professional income in order to serve their country at its Capital.

Let us glance for a moment at the other reason. Owing to our laws (doubtless perfectly reasonable, and which it is not my intention to criticise,) a man must reside in the place he represents. Here again we differ from all other constitutional countries. Unfortunately, our clever young men leave the small towns of their birth and flock up to the great centres as offering wider fields for their advancement. In consequence, the local elector finds his choice limited to what is left—the intellectual skimmed milk,

of which the cream has been carried to New York or other big cities. No country can exist without a metropolis, and as such a centre by a natural law of assimilation absorbs the best brains of the country, in other nations it has been found to the interests of all parties to send down brilliant young men to the "provinces," to be, in good time, returned by them to the national assemblies.

As this is not a political article the simple indication of these two causes will suffice, without entering into the question of their reasonableness or of their justice. The social bearing of such a condition is here the only side of the question under discussion; it is difficult to over-rate the influence that a man's family exert over his decisions.

Political ambition is exceedingly rare among our women of position; when the American husband is bitten with it, the wife submits to, rather than abets, his inclinations. In most cases our women are not cosmopolitan enough to enjoy being transplanted far away from their friends and relations, even to fill positions of importance and honor. A New York woman of great frankness and intelligence, who found herself recently in a Western city under these circumstances, said, in answer to a flattering remark that "the ladies of the place expected her to become their social leader," "I don't see anything to lead," thus very plainly expressing her

opinion of the situation. It is hardly fair to expect a woman accustomed to the life of New York or the foreign capitals, to look forward with enthusiasm to a term of years passed in Albany, or in Washington.

In France very much the same state of affairs has been reached by quite a different route. The aristocracy detest the present government, and it is not considered "good form" by them to sit in the Chamber of Deputies or to accept any but diplomatic positions. They condescend to fill the latter because that entails living away from their own country, as they feel more at ease in foreign courts than at the Republican receptions of the Elysée.

There is a deplorable tendency among our self-styled aristocracy to look upon their circle as a class apart. They separate themselves more each year from the life of the country, and affect to smile at any of their number who honestly wish to be of service to the nation. They, like the French aristocracy, are perfectly willing, even anxious, to fill agreeable diplomatic posts at first-class foreign capitals, and are naïvely astonished when their offers of service are not accepted with gratitude by the authorities in Washington. But let a husband propose to his better half some humble position in the machinery of our government, and see what the lady's answer will be.

The opinion prevails among a large class of our wealthy and cultivated people, that to go

into public life is to descend to duties beneath them. They judge the men who occupy such positions with insulting severity, classing them in their minds as corrupt and self-seeking, than which nothing can be more childish or more imbecile. Any observer who has lived in the different grades of society will quickly renounce the puerile idea that sporting or intellectual pursuits are alone worthy of a gentleman's attention. This very political life, which appears unworthy of their attention to so many men, is, in reality, the great field where the nations of the world fight out their differences, where the seed is sown that will ripen later into vast crops of truth and justice. It is (if rightly regarded and honestly followed) the battle-ground where man's highest qualities are put to their noblest use—that of working for the happiness of others.

No. 14

The Small Summer Hotel

WE certainly are the most eccentric race on the surface of the globe and ought to be a delight to the soul of an explorer, so full is our civilization of contradictions, unexplained habits and curious customs. It is quite unnecessary for the inquisitive gentlemen who pass their time prying into other people's affairs and then returning home to write books about their discoveries, to risk their lives and digestions in long journeys into Central Africa or to the frozen zones, while so much good material lies ready to their hands in our own land. The habits of the "natives" in New England alone might occupy an active mind indefinitely, offering as interesting problems as any to be solved by penetrating Central Asia or visiting the man-eating tribes of Australia.

Perhaps one of our scientific celebrities, before undertaking his next long voyage, will find time to make observations at home and collect sufficient data to answer some questions that have long puzzled my unscientific brain. He would be doing good work. Fame and honors await the man who can explain why, for instance, sane Americans of the better class, with money enough to choose their surroundings, should pass so much of their time in hotels and boarding houses.

There must be a reason for the vogue of these retreats—every action has a cause, however remote. I shall await with the deepest interest a paper on this subject from one of our great explorers, untoward circumstances having some time ago forced me to pass a few days in a popular establishment of this class.

During my visit I amused myself by observing the inmates and trying to discover why they had come there. So far as I could find out, the greater part of them belonged to our well-to-do class, and when at home doubtless lived in luxurious houses and were waited on by trained servants. In the small summer hotel where I met them, they were living in dreary little ten by twelve foot rooms, containing only the absolute necessities of existence, a wash-stand, a bureau, two chairs and a bed. And such a bed! One mattress about four inches thick over squeaking slats, cotton sheets, so nicely calculated to the size of the bed that the slightest move on the part of the sleeper would detach them from their moorings and undo the housemaid's work; two limp, discouraged pillows that had evidently been "banting," and a few towels a foot long with a surface like sand-paper, completed the fittings of the room. Baths were unknown, and hot water was a luxury distributed sparingly by a capricious handmaiden. It is only fair to add that everything in the room was perfectly clean, as was the coarse table linen in the dining room.

The meals were in harmony with the rooms and furniture, consisting only of the strict necessities, cooked with a Spartan disregard for such sybarite foibles as seasoning or dressing. I believe there was a substantial meal somewhere in the early morning hours, but I never succeeded in getting down in time to inspect it. By successful bribery, I induced one of the village belles, who served at table, to bring a cup of coffee to my room. The first morning it appeared already poured out in the cup, with sugar and cold milk added at her discretion. At one o'clock a dinner was served, consisting of soup (occasionally), one meat dish and attendant vegetables, a meagre dessert, and nothing else. At half-past six there was an equally rudimentary meal, called "tea," after which no further food was distributed to the inmates, who all, however, seemed perfectly contented with this arrangement. In fact they apparently looked on the act of eating as a disagreeable task, to be hurried through as soon as possible that they might return to their aimless rocking and chattering.

Instead of dinner hour being the feature of the day, uniting people around an attractive table, and attended by conversation, and the meal lasting long enough for one's food to be properly eaten, it was rushed through as though we were all trying to catch a train. Then, when the meal was over, the boarders relapsed into apathy again.

No one ever called this hospitable home a boarding-house, for the proprietor was furious if it was given that name. He also scorned the idea of keeping a hotel. So that I never quite understood in what relation he stood toward us. He certainly considered himself our host, and ignored the financial side of the question severely. In order not to hurt his feelings by speaking to him of money, we were obliged to get our bills by strategy from a male subordinate. Mine host and his family were apparently unaware that there were people under their roof who paid them for board and lodging. We were all looked upon as guests and "entertained," and our rights impartially ignored.

Nothing, I find, is so distinctive of New England as this graceful veiling of the practical side of life. The landlady always reminded me, by her manner, of Barrie's description of the bill-sticker's wife who "cut" her husband when she chanced to meet him "professionally" engaged. As a result of this extreme detachment from things material, the house ran itself, or was run by incompetent Irish and negro "help." There were no bells in the rooms, which simplified the service, and nothing could be ordered out of meal hours.

The material defects in board and lodging sink, however, into insignificance before the moral and social unpleasantness of an establishment such as this. All ages, all conditions,

and all creeds are promiscuously huddled together. It is impossible to choose whom one shall know or whom avoid. A horrible burlesque of family life is enacted, with all its inconveniences and none of its sanctity. People from different cities, with different interests and standards, are expected to "chum" together in an intimacy that begins with the eight o'clock breakfast and ends only when all retire for the night. No privacy, no isolation is allowed. If you take a book and begin to read in a remote corner of a parlor or piazza, some idle matron or idiotic girl will tranquilly invade your poor little bit of privacy and gabble of her affairs and the day's gossip. There is no escape unless you mount to your ten-by-twelve cell and sit (like the Premiers of England when they visit Balmoral) on the bed, to do your writing, for want of any other conveniences. Even such retirement is resented by the boarders. You are thought to be haughty and to give yourself airs if you do not sit for twelve consecutive hours each day in unending conversation with them.

When one reflects that thousands of our countrymen pass at least one-half of their lives in these asylums, and that thousands more in America know no other homes, but move from one hotel to another, while the same outlay would procure them cosy, cheerful dwellings, it does seem as if these modern Arabs, Holmes's "Folding Bed-ouins," were gradually returning

to prehistoric habits and would end by eating roots promiscuously in caves.

The contradiction appears more marked the longer one reflects on the love of independence and impatience of all restraint that characterize our race. If such an institution had been conceived by people of the Old World, accustomed to moral slavery and to a thousand petty tyrannies, it would not be so remarkable, but that we, of all the races of the earth, should have created a form of torture unknown to Louis XI. or to the Spanish Inquisitors, is indeed inexplicable! Outside of this happy land the institution is unknown. The *pension* when it exists abroad, is only an exotic growth for an American market. Among European nations it is undreamed of; the poorest when they travel take furnished rooms, where they are served in private, or go to restaurants or *table d'hôtes* for their meals. In a strictly continental hotel the public parlor does not exist. People do not travel to make acquaintances, but for health or recreation, or to improve their minds. The enforced intimacy of our American family house, with its attendant quarrelling and back-biting, is an infliction of which Europeans are in happy ignorance.

One explanation, only, occurs to me, which is that among New England people, largely descended from Puritan stock, there still lingers some blind impulse at self-mortification, an hereditary inclination to make this life as dis-

agreeable as possible by self-immolation. Their ancestors, we are told by Macaulay, suppressed bull baiting, not because it hurt the bull, but because it gave pleasure to the people. Here in New England they refused the Roman dogma of Purgatory and then with complete inconsistency, invented the boarding-house, in order, doubtless, to take as much of the joy as possible out of this life, as a preparation for endless bliss in the next.

No. 15

A False Start

HAVING had, during a wandering existence, many opportunities of observing my compatriots away from home and familiar surroundings, in various circles of cosmopolitan society, at foreign courts, in diplomatic life, or unofficial capacities, I am forced to acknowledge that whereas my countrywoman invariably assumed her new position with grace and dignity, my countryman, in the majority of cases, appeared at a disadvantage.

I take particular pleasure in making this tribute to my "sisters'" tact and wit, as I have been accused of being "hard" on American women, and some half-humorous criticisms have been taken seriously by over-susceptible women — doubtless troubled with guilty consciences for nothing is more exact than the old French proverb, "It is only the truth that wounds."

The fact remains clear, however, that American men, as regards polish, facility in expressing themselves in foreign languages, the arts of pleasing and entertaining, in short, the thousand and one nothings composing that agreeable whole, a cultivated member of society, are inferior to their womenkind. I feel sure that all Americans who have travelled and have seen their compatriot in his social relations with for-

eigners, will agree with this, reluctant as I am to acknowledge it.

That a sister and brother brought up together, under the same influences, should later differ to this extent seems incredible. It is just this that convinces me we have made a false start as regards the education and ambitions of our young men.

To find the reasons one has only to glance back at our past. After the struggle that insured our existence as a united nation, came a period of great prosperity. When both seemed secure, we did not pause and take breath, as it were, before entering a new epoch of development, but dashed ahead on the old lines. It is here that we got on the wrong road. Naturally enough too, for our peculiar position on this continent, far away from the centres of cultivation and art, surrounded only by less successful states with which to compare ourselves, has led us into forming erroneous ideas as to the proportions of things, causing us to exaggerate the value of material prosperity and undervalue matters of infinitely greater importance, which have been neglected in consequence.

A man who, after fighting through our late war, had succeeded in amassing a fortune, naturally wished his son to follow him on the only road in which it had ever occurred to him that success was of any importance. So beyond giving the boy a college education, which he had

not enjoyed, his ambition rarely went; his idea being to make a practical business man of him, or a lawyer, that he could keep the estate together more intelligently. In thousands of cases, of course, individual taste and bent over-ruled this influence, and a career of science or art was chosen; but in the mass of the American people, it was firmly implanted that the pursuit of wealth was the only occupation to which a reasonable human being could devote himself. A young man who was not in some way engaged in increasing his income was looked upon as a very undesirable member of society, and sure, sooner or later, to come to harm.

Millionaires declined to send their sons to college, saying they would get ideas there that would unfit them for business, to Paterfamilias the one object of life. Under such fostering influences, the ambitions in our country have gradually given way to money standards and the false start has been made! Leaving aside at once the question of money in its relation to our politics (although it would be a fruitful subject for moralizing), and confining ourselves strictly to the social side of life, we soon see the results of this mammon worship.

In England (although Englishmen have been contemptuously called the shop-keepers of the world) the extension and maintenance of their vast empire is the mainspring which keeps the great machine in movement. And one sees tens

of thousands of well-born and delicately-bred men cheerfully entering the many branches of public service where the hope of wealth can never come, and retiring on pensions or half-pay in the strength of their middle age, apparently without a regret or a thought beyond their country's well-being.

In France, where the passionate love of their own land has made colonial extension impossible, the modern Frenchman of education is more interested in the yearly exhibition at the *Salon* or in a successful play at the *Français*, than in the stock markets of the world.

Would that our young men had either of these bents! They have copied from England a certain love of sport, without the English climate or the calm of country and garrison life, to make these sports logical and necessary. As the young American millionaire thinks he must go on increasing his fortune, we see the anomaly of a man working through a summer's day in Wall Street, then dashing in a train to some suburban club, and appearing a half-hour later on the polo field. Next to wealth, sport has become the ambition of the wealthy classes, and has grown so into our college life that the number of students in the freshman class of our great universities is seriously influenced by that institution's losses or gains at football.

What is the result of all this? A young man starts in life with the firm intention of making

a great deal of money. If he has any time left from that occupation he will devote it to sport. Later in life, when he has leisure and travels, or is otherwise thrown with cultivated strangers, he must naturally be at a disadvantage. "Shop," he cannot talk; he knows that is vulgar. Music, art, the drama, and literature are closed books to him, in spite of the fact that he may have a box on the grand tier at the opera and a couple of dozen high-priced "masterpieces" hanging around his drawing-rooms. If he is of a finer clay than the general run of his class, he will realize dimly that somehow the goal has been missed in his life race. His chase after the material has left him so little time to cultivate the ideal, that he has prepared himself a sad and aimless old age; unless he can find pleasure in doing as did a man I have been told about, who, receiving half a dozen millions from his father's estate, conceived the noble idea of increasing them so that he might leave to each of his four children as much as he had himself received. With the strictest economy, and by suppressing out of his life and that of his children all amusements and superfluous outlay, he has succeeded now for many years in living on the income of his income. Time will never hang heavy on this Harpagon's hands. He is a perfectly happy individual, but his conversation is hardly of a kind to attract, and it may be doubted if the rest of the family are as much to be envied.

An artist who had lived many years of his life in Paris and London was speaking the other day of a curious phase he had remarked in our American life. He had been accustomed over there to have his studio the meeting-place of friends, who would drop in to smoke and lounge away an hour, chatting as he worked. To his astonishment, he tells me that since he has been in New York not one of the many men he knows has ever passed an hour in his rooms. Is not that a significant fact? Another remark which points its own moral was repeated to me recently. A foreigner visiting here, to whom American friends were showing the sights of our city, exclaimed at last: "You have not pointed out to me any celebrities except millionaires. 'Do you see that man? he is worth ten millions. Look at that house! it cost one million dollars, and there are pictures in it worth over three million dollars. That trotter cost one hundred thousand dollars,' etc." Was he not right? And does it not give my reader a shudder to see in black and white the phrases that are, nevertheless, so often on our lips?

This levelling of everything to its cash value is so ingrained in us that we are unconscious of it, as we are of using slang or local expressions until our attention is called to them. I was present once at a farce played in a London theatre, where the audience went into roars of laughter every time the stage American said, "Why, cer-

tainly." I was indignant, and began explaining to my English friend that we never used such an absurd phrase. "Are you sure?" he asked. "Why, certainly," I said, and stopped, catching the twinkle in his eye.

It is very much the same thing with money. We do not notice how often it slips into the conversation. "Out of the fullness of the heart the mouth speaketh." Talk to an American of a painter and the charm of his work. He will be sure to ask, "Do his pictures sell well?" and will lose all interest if you say he can't sell them at all. As if that had anything to do with it!

Remembering the well-known anecdote of Schopenhauer and the gold piece which he used to put beside his plate at the *table d'hôte*, where he ate, surrounded by the young officers of the German army, and which was to be given to the poor the first time he heard any conversation that was not about promotion or women, I have been tempted to try the experiment in our clubs, changing the subjects to stocks and sport, and feel confident that my contributions to charity would not ruin me.

All this has had the result of making our men dull companions; after dinner, or at a country house, if the subject they love is tabooed, they talk of nothing! It is sad for a rich man (unless his mind has remained entirely between the leaves of his ledger) to realize that money really buys very little, and above a certain amount can

give no satisfaction in proportion to its bulk, beyond that delight which comes from a sense of possession. Crœsus often discovers as he grows old that he has neglected to provide himself with the only thing that "is a joy for ever"—a cultivated intellect—in order to amass a fortune that turns to ashes, when he has time to ask of it any of the pleasures and resources he fondly imagined it would afford him. Like Talleyrand's young man who would not learn whist, he finds that he has prepared for himself a dreadful old age!

No. 16

A Holy Land

NOT long ago an article came under my notice descriptive of the neighborhood around Grant's tomb and the calm that midsummer brings to that vicinity, laughingly referred to as the "Holy Land."

As careless fingers wandering over the strings of a violin may unintentionally strike a chord, so the writer of those lines, all unconsciously, with a jest, set vibrating a world of tender memories and associations; for the region spoken of is truly a holy land to me, the playground of my youth, and connected with the sweetest ties that can bind one's thoughts to the past.

Ernest Renan in his *Souvenirs d'Enfance*, tells of a Brittany legend, firmly believed in that wild land, of the vanished city of "Is," which ages ago disappeared beneath the waves. The peasants still point out at a certain place on the coast the site of the fabled city, and the fishermen tell how during great storms they have caught glimpses of its belfries and ramparts far down between the waves; and assert that on calm summer nights they can hear the bells chiming up from those depths. I also have a vanished "Is" in my heart, and as I grow older, I love to listen to the murmurs that float up from the past.

They seem to come from an infinite distance, almost like echoes from another life.

At that enchanted time we lived during the summers in an old wooden house my father had re-arranged into a fairly comfortable dwelling. A tradition, which no one had ever taken the trouble to verify, averred that Washington had once lived there, which made that hero very real to us. The picturesque old house stood high on a slope where the land rises boldly; with an admirable view of distant mountain, river and opposing Palisades.

The new Riverside drive (which, by the bye, should make us very lenient toward the men who robbed our city a score of years ago, for they left us that vast work in atonement), has so changed the neighborhood it is impossible now for pious feet to make a pilgrimage to those childish shrines. One house, however, still stands as when it was our nearest neighbor. It had sheltered General Gage, land for many acres around had belonged to him. He was an enthusiastic gardener, and imported, among a hundred other fruits and plants, the "Queen Claude" plum from France, which was successfully acclimated on his farm. In New York a plum of that kind is still called a "green gage." The house has changed hands many times since we used to play around the Grecian pillars of its portico. A recent owner, dissatisfied doubtless with its classic simplicity, has painted it a cheerful mus-

tard color and crowned it with a fine new *Mansard* roof. Thus disfigured, and shorn of its surrounding trees, the poor old house stands blankly by the roadside, reminding one of the Greek statue in Anstey's "Painted Venus" after the London barber had decorated her to his taste. When driving by there now, I close my eyes.

Another house, where we used to be taken to play, was that of Audubon, in the park of that name. Many a rainy afternoon I have passed with his children choosing our favorite birds in the glass cases that filled every nook and corner of the tumble-down old place, or turning over the leaves of the enormous volumes he would so graciously take down from their places for our amusement. I often wonder what has become of those vast *in-folios*, and if any one ever opens them now and admires as we did the glowing colored plates in which the old ornithologist took such pride. There is something infinitely sad in the idea of a collection of books slowly gathered together at the price of privations and sacrifices, cherished, fondled, lovingly read, and then at the owner's death, coldly sent away to stand for ever unopened on the shelves of some public library. It is like neglecting poor dumb children!

An event that made a profound impression on my childish imagination occurred while my father, who was never tired of improving our little domain, was cutting a pathway down the

steep side of the slope to the river. A great slab, dislodged by a workman's pick, fell, disclosing the grave of an Indian chief. In a low archway or shallow cave sat the skeleton of the chieftain, his bows and arrows arranged around him on the ground, mingled with fragments of an elaborate costume, of which little remained but the bead-work. That it was the tomb of a man great among his people was evident from the care with which the grave had been prepared and then hidden, proving how, hundreds of years before our civilization, another race had chosen this noble cliff and stately river landscape as the fitting framework for a great warrior's tomb.

This discovery made no little stir in the scientific world of that day. Hundreds came to see it, and as photography had not then come into the world, many drawings were made and casts taken, and finally the whole thing was removed to the rooms of the Historical Society. From that day the lonely little path held an awful charm for us. Our childish readings of Cooper had developed in us that love of the Indian and his wild life, so characteristic of boyhood thirty years ago. On still summer afternoons, the place had a primeval calm that froze the young blood in our veins. Although we prided ourselves on our quality as "braves," and secretly pined to be led on the war-path, we were shy of walking in that vicinity in daylight,

and no power on earth, not even the offer of the tomahawk or snow-shoes for which our souls longed, would have taken us there at night.

A place connected in my memory with a tragic association was across the river on the last southern slope of the Palisades. Here we stood breathless while my father told the brief story of the duel between Burr and Hamilton, and showed us the rock stained by the younger man's life-blood. In those days there was a simple iron railing around the spot where Hamilton had expired, but of later years I have been unable to find any trace of the place. The tide of immigration has brought so deep a deposit of "saloons" and suburban "balls" that the very face of the land is changed, old lovers of that shore know it no more. Never were the environs of a city so wantonly and recklessly degraded. Municipalities have vied with millionaires in soiling and debasing the exquisite shores of our river, that, thirty years ago, were unrivalled the world over.

The glamour of the past still lies for me upon this landscape, in spite of its many defacements. The river whispers of boyish boating parties, and the woods recall a thousand childish hopes and fears, resolute departures to join the pirates, or the red men in their strongholds—journeys boldly carried out until twilight cooled our courage and the supper-hour proved a stronger temptation than war and carnage.

When I sat down this summer evening to write a few lines about happy days on the banks of the Hudson, I hardly realized how sweet those memories were to me. The rewriting of the old names has evoked from their long sleep so many loved faces. Arms seem reaching out to me from the past. The house is very still to-night. I seem to be nearer my loved dead than to the living. The bells of my lost "Is" are ringing clear in the silence.

No. 17

Royalty at Play

FEW more amusing sights are to be seen in these days, than that of crowned heads running away from their dull old courts and functions, roughing it in hotels and villas, gambling, yachting and playing at being rich nobodies. With much intelligence they have all chosen the same Republican playground, where visits cannot possibly be twisted into meaning any new "combination" or political move, thus assuring themselves the freedom from care or responsibility, that seems to be the aim of their existence. Alongside of well-to-do Royalties in good paying situations, are those out of a job, who are looking about for a "place." One cannot take an afternoon's ramble anywhere between Cannes and Mentone without meeting a half-dozen of these magnates.

The other day, in one short walk, I ran across three Empresses, two Queens, and an Heir-apparent, and then fled to my hotel, fearing to be unfitted for America, if I went on "keeping such company." They are knowing enough, these wandering great ones, and after trying many places have hit on this charming coast as offering more than any other for their comfort and enjoyment. The vogue of these sunny shores dates from their annexation to France,—a price

Victor Emmanuel reluctantly paid for French help in his war with Austria. Napoleon III.'s demand for Savoy and this littoral, was first made known to Victor Emmanuel at a state ball at Genoa. Savoy was his birthplace and his home! The King broke into a wild temper, cursing the French Emperor and making insulting allusions to his parentage, saying he had not one drop of Bonaparte blood in his veins. The King's frightened courtiers tried to stop this outburst, showing him the French Ambassador at his elbow. With a superhuman effort Victor Emmanuel controlled himself, and turning to the Ambassador, said:

"I fear my tongue ran away with me!" With a smile and a bow the great French diplomatist remarked:

"*Sire*, I am so deaf I have not heard a word your Majesty has been saying!"

The fashion of coming to the Riviera for health or for amusement, dates from the sixties, when the Empress of Russia passed a winter at Nice, as a last attempt to prolong the existence of the dying Tsarewitsch, her son. There also the next season the Duke of Edinburgh wooed and won her daughter (then the greatest heiress in Europe) for his bride. The world moves fast and a journey it required a matter of life and death to decide on, then, is gayly undertaken now, that a prince may race a yacht, or a princess try her luck at the gambling tables. When one reflects that the "royal caste," in Europe

alone, numbers some eight hundred people, and that the East is beginning to send out its more enterprising crowned heads to get a taste of the fun, that beyond drawing their salaries, these good people have absolutely nothing to do, except to amuse themselves, it is no wonder that this happy land is crowded with royal pleasure-seekers.

After a try at Florence and Aix, "the Queen" has been faithful to Cimiez, a charming site back of Nice. That gay city is always *en fête* the day she arrives, as her carriages pass surrounded by French cavalry, one can catch a glimpse of her aged kindly face and bowed figure, which nevertheless she can make so dignified when occasion requires. The stay here is, indeed, a holiday for this record-breaking sovereign, who potters about her private grounds of a morning in a donkey-chair, sunning herself and watching her Battenberg grandchildren at play. In the afternoon, she drives a couple of hours—in an open carriage—one outrider in black livery alone distinguishing her turnout from the others.

The Prince of Wales makes his headquarters at Cannes, where he has only medium luck in sailing, for which he consoles himself with jolly dinners at Monte Carlo. You can see him almost any evening in the *Restaurant de Paris*, surrounded by his own particular set,—the Duchess of Devonshire (who started a penniless German officer's daughter, and became twice a

duchess); Lady de Grey and Lady Wolverton, both showing near six feet of slender English beauty; at their side, and lovelier than either, the Countess of Essex. The husbands of these "Merry Wives" are absent, but do not seem to be missed, as the ladies sit smoking and laughing over their coffee, the party only breaking up towards eleven o'clock to try its luck at *trente et quarante*, until a "special" takes them back to Cannes.

So wonderfully does England's Heir-apparent hold his own in the long and difficult battle with Father Time that it is hard to realize, while watching his alert manner and youthful expression, that the genial, smiling gentleman is no longer young. The likeness to his imperial and royal mother becomes each year more marked. Whenever I see one of the Queen's children I am struck with the way her strong personality is stamped on her descendants. The Prince's voice, too, is oddly like the Queen's, deep and peculiarly sweet in tone. He has a pleasant twinkle in his small eyes, and an entire absence of *pose*, that accounts largely for his immense and enduring popularity.

But the Hotel Cap Martin shelters quieter crowned heads. The Emperor and Empress of Austria, who tramp about the hilly roads, the King and Queen of Saxony and the fat Archduchess Stephanie. Austria's Empress looks sadly changed and ill, as does another lady of whom one can occasionally catch a glimpse, walking pain-

fully with a crutch-stick in the shadow of the trees near her villa. It is hard to believe that this white-haired, bent old woman was once the imperial beauty who from the salons of the Tuileries dictated the fashions of the world! Few have paid so dearly for their brief hour of splendor!

Cannes with its excellent harbor is the centre of interest during the racing season when the Tsarewitsch comes on his yacht Czaritza. At the Battle of Flowers, one is pretty sure to see the Duke of Cambridge, his Imperial Highness, the Grand Duke Michael, Prince Christian of Denmark, H. R. H. the Duke of Nassau, H. I. H. the Archduke Ferdinand d'Este, their Serene Highnesses of Mecklenburg-Schwerin and the Saxe-Coburg-Gothas, also H. I. H. Marie Valérie and the Schleswig-Holsteins, pelting each other and the public with *confetti* and flowers. Indeed, half the *Almanach de Gotha*, that continental "society list," seems to be sunning itself here and forgetting its cares, on bicycles or on board yachts. It is said that the Crown Princess of Honolulu (whoever she may be) honors Mentone with her presence, and the newly deposed Queen "Ranavalo" of Madagascar is *en route* to join in the fun.

This crowd of royalty reminds me of a story the old sea-dogs who gather about the "Admirals' corner" of the Metropolitan Club in Washington, love to tell you. An American cockswain, dazzled by a doubly royal visit, with

attending suites, on board the old "Constitution," came up to his commanding officer and touching his cap, said:

"Beg pardon, Admiral, but one of them kings has tumbled down the gangway and broke his leg."

It has become a much more amusing thing to wear a crown than it was. Times have changed indeed since Marie Laczinska lived the fifty lonely years of her wedded life and bore her many children, in one bed-room at Versailles—a monotony only broken by visits to Fontainebleau or Marly. Shakespeare's line no longer fits the case.

Beyond securing rich matches for their children, and keeping a sharp lookout that the Radicals at home do not unduly cut down their civil lists, these great ones have little but their amusements to occupy them. Do they ever reflect, as they rush about visiting each other and squabbling over precedence when they meet, that some fine morning the tax-payers may wake up, and ask each other why they are being crushed under such heavy loads, that eight hundred or more quite useless people may pass their lives in foreign watering-places, away from their homes and their duties? It will be a bad day for them when the long-suffering subjects say to them, "Since we get on so exceedingly well during your many visits abroad, we think we will try how it will work without you at all!"

The Prince of little Monaco seems to be about the only one up to the situation, for he at least stays at home, and in connection with two other gentlemen runs an exceedingly good hotel and several restaurants on his estates, doing all he can to attract money into the place, while making the strictest laws to prevent his subjects gambling at the famous tables. Now if other royalties instead of amusing themselves all the year round would go in for something practical like this, they might become useful members of the community. This idea of Monaco's Prince strikes one as most timely, and as opening a career for other indigent crowned heads. Hotels are getting so good and so numerous, that without some especial "attraction" a new one can hardly succeed; but a "Hohenzollern House" well situated in Berlin, with William II. to receive the tourists at the door, and his fat wife at the desk, would be sure to prosper. It certainly would be pleasanter for him to spend money so honestly earned than the millions wrested from half-starving peasants which form his present income. Besides there is almost as much gold lace on a hotel employee's livery as on a court costume!

The numerous crowned heads one meets wandering about, can hardly lull themselves over their "games" with the flattering unction that they are of use, for, have they not France before them (which they find so much to their taste) stronger, richer, more respected than ever since

she shook herself free of such incumbrances? Not to mention our own democratic country, which has managed to hold its own, in spite of their many gleeful predictions to the contrary.

No. 18

A Rock Ahead

HAVING had occasion several times during this past season, to pass by the larger stores in the vicinity of Twenty-third Street, I have been struck more than ever, by the endless flow of womankind that beats against the doors of those establishments. If they were temples where a beneficent deity was distributing health, learning, and all the good things of existence, the rush could hardly have been greater. It saddened me to realize that each of the eager women I saw was, on the contrary, dispensing something of her strength and brain, as well as the wearily earned stipend of the men of her family (if not her own), for what could be of little profit to her.

It occurred to me that, if the people who are so quick to talk about the elevating and refining influences of women, could take an hour or two and inspect the centres in question, they might not be so firm in their beliefs. For, reluctant as I am to acknowledge it, the one great misfortune in this country, is the unnatural position which has been (from some mistaken idea of chivalry) accorded to women here. The result of placing them on this pedestal, and treating them as things apart, has been to make women in America poorer helpmeets to their husbands

than in any other country on the face of the globe, civilized or uncivilized.

Strange as it may appear, this is not confined to the rich, but permeates all classes, becoming more harmful in descending the social scale, and it will bring about a disintegration of our society, sooner than could be believed. The saying on which we have all been brought up, viz., that you can gauge the point of civilization attained in a nation by the position it accords to woman, was quite true as long as woman was considered man's inferior. To make her his equal was perfectly just; all the trouble begins when you attempt to make her man's superior, a something apart from his working life, and not the companion of his troubles and cares, as she was intended to be.

When a small shopkeeper in Europe marries, the next day you will see his young wife taking her place at the desk in his shop. While he serves his customers, his smiling spouse keeps the books, makes change, and has an eye on the employees. At noon they dine together; in the evening, after the shop is closed, are pleased or saddened together over the results of the day. The wife's *dot* almost always goes into the business, so that there is a community of interest to unite them, and their lives are passed together. In this country, what happens? The husband places his new wife in a small house, or in two or three furnished rooms, generally so far away that all idea

of dining with her is impossible. In consequence, he has a "quick lunch" down town, and does not see his wife between eight o'clock in the morning and seven in the evening. His business is a closed book to her, in which she can have no interest, for her weary husband naturally revolts from talking "shop," even if she is in a position to understand him.

His false sense of shielding her from the rude world makes him keep his troubles to himself, so she rarely knows his financial position and sulks over his "meanness" to her, in regard to pin-money; and being a perfectly idle person, her days are apt to be passed in a way especially devised by Satan for unoccupied hands. She has learned no cooking from her mother; "going to market" has become a thing of the past. So she falls a victim to the allurements of the bargain-counter; returning home after hours of aimless wandering, irritable and aggrieved because she cannot own the beautiful things she has seen. She passes the evening in trying to win her husband's consent to some purchase he knows he cannot afford, while it breaks his heart to refuse her—some object, which, were she really his companion, she would not have had the time to see or the folly to ask for.

The janitor in our building is truly a toiler. He rarely leaves his dismal quarters under the sidewalk, but "Madam" walks the streets clad in sealskin and silk, a "Gainsborough" crowning

her false "bang." I always think of Max O'Rell's clever saying, when I see her: "The sweat of the American husband crystallizes into diamond ear-rings for the American woman." My janitress sports a diminutive pair of those jewels, and has hopes of larger ones! Instead of "doing" the bachelor's rooms in the building as her husband's helpmeet, she "does" her spouse, and a char-woman works for her. She is one of the drops in the tide that ebbs and flows on Twenty-third Street—a discontented woman placed in a false position by our absurd customs.

Go a little further up in the social scale and you will find the same "detached" feeling. In a household I know of only one horse and a *coupé* can be afforded. Do you suppose it is for the use of the weary breadwinner? Not at all. He walks from his home to the "elevated." The carriage is to take his wife to teas or the park. In a year or two she will go abroad, leaving him alone to turn the crank that produces the income. As it is, she always leaves him for six months each year in a half-closed house, to the tender mercies of a caretaker. Two additional words could be advantageously added to the wedding service. After "for richer for poorer," I should like to hear a bride promise to cling to her husband "for winter for summer!"

Make another step up and stand in the entrance of a house at two A. M., just as the cotillion is commencing, and watch the couples leav-

ing. The husband, who has been in Wall Street all day, knows that he must be there again at nine next morning. He is furious at the lateness of the hour, and dropping with fatigue. His wife, who has done nothing to weary her, is equally enraged to be taken away just as the ball was becoming amusing. What a happy, united pair they are as the footman closes the door and the carriage rolls off home! Who is to blame? The husband is vainly trying to lead the most exacting of double lives, that of a business man all day and a society man all night. You can pick him out at a glance in a ballroom. His eye shows you that there is no rest for him, for he has placed his wife at the head of an establishment whose working crushes him into the mud of care and anxiety. Has he any one to blame but himself?

In England, I am told, the man of a family goes up to London in the spring and gets his complete outfit, down to the smallest details of hat-box and umbrella. If there happens to be money left, the wife gets a new gown or two. If not, she "turns" the old ones and rejoices vicariously in the splendor of her "lord." I know one charming little home over there, where the ladies cannot afford a pony-carriage, because the three indispensable hunters eat up the wherewithal.

Thackeray was delighted to find one household (Major Ponto's) where the governess ruled supreme, and I feel a fiendish pleasure in these

accounts of a country where men have been able to maintain some rights, and am moved to preach a crusade for the liberation of the American husband, that the poor, down-trodden creature may revolt from the slavery where he is held and once more claim his birthright. If he be prompt to act (and is successful) he may work such a reform that our girls, on marrying, may feel that some duties and responsibilities go with their new positions; and a state of things be changed, where it is possible for a woman to be pitied by her friends as a model of abnegation, because she has decided to remain in town during the summer to keep her husband company and make his weary home-coming brighter. Or where (as in a story recently heard) a foreigner on being presented to an American bride abroad and asking for her husband, could hear in answer: "Oh, he could not come; he was too busy. I am making my wedding-trip without him."

No. 19

The *Grand Prix*

IN most cities, it is impossible to say when the "season" ends. In London and with us in New York it dwindles off without any special finish, but in Paris it closes like a trap-door, or the curtain on the last scene of a pantomime, while the lights are blazing and the orchestra is banging its loudest. The *Grand Prix*, which takes place on the second Sunday in June, is the climax of the spring gayeties. Up to that date, the social pace has been getting faster and faster, like the finish of the big race itself, and fortunately for the lives of the women as well as the horses, ends as suddenly.

In 1897, the last steeple chase at Auteuil, which precedes the *Grand Prix* by one week, was won by a horse belonging to an actress of the *Théâtre Français*, a lady who has been a great deal before the public already in connection with the life and death of young Lebaudy. This youth having had the misfortune to inherit an enormous fortune, while still a mere boy, plunged into the wildest dissipation, and became the prey of a band of sharpers and blacklegs. Mlle. Marie Louise Marsy appears to have been the one person who had a sincere affection for the unfortunate youth. When his health gave way during his military service, she threw over her engage-

ment with the *Français*, and nursed her lover until his death—a devotion rewarded by the gift of a million.

At the present moment, four or five of the band of self-styled noblemen who traded on the boy's inexperience and generosity, are serving out terms in the state prisons for blackmailing, and the *Théâtre Français* possesses the anomaly of a young and beautiful actress, who runs a racing stable in her own name.

The *Grand Prix* dates from the reign of Napoleon III., who, at the suggestion of the great railway companies, inaugurated this race in 1862, in imitation of the English Derby, as a means of attracting people to Paris. The city and the railways each give half of the forty-thousand-dollar prize. It is the great official race of the year. The President occupies the central pavilion, surrounded by the members of the cabinet and the diplomatic corps. On the tribunes and lawn can be seen the *Tout Paris*—all the celebrities of the great and half-world who play such an important part in the life of France's capital. The whole colony of the *Rastaquouëres*, is sure to be there, "*Rastas*," as they are familiarly called by the Parisians, who make little if any distinction in their minds between a South American (blazing in diamonds and vulgar clothes) and our own select (?) colony. Apropos of this inability of the Europeans to appreciate our fine social distinctions, I have been told of a well-born

New Yorker who took a French noblewoman rather to task for receiving an American she thought unworthy of notice, and said:

"How can you receive her? Her husband keeps a hotel!"

"Is that any reason?" asked the Frenchwoman; "I thought *all* Americans kept hotels."

For the *Grand Prix*, every woman not absolutely bankrupt has a new costume, her one idea being a *création* that will attract attention and eclipse her rivals. The dressmakers have had a busy time of it for weeks before.

Every horse that can stand up is pressed into service for the day. For twenty-four hours before, the whole city is *en fête*, and Paris *en fête* is always a sight worth seeing. The natural gayety of the Parisians, a characteristic noticed (if we are to believe the historians) as far back as the conquest of Gaul by Julius Cæsar, breaks out in all its amusing spontaneity. If the day is fine, the entire population gives itself up to amusement. From early morning the current sets towards the charming corner of the Bois where the Longchamps race-course lies, picturesquely encircled by the Seine (alive with a thousand boats), and backed by the woody slopes of Suresnes and St. Cloud. By noon every corner and vantage point of the landscape is seized upon, when, with a blare of trumpets and the rattle of cavalry, the President arrives in his turnout *à la Daumont*, two postilions in blue

and gold, and a *piqueur*, preceded by a detachment of the showy *Gardes Républicains* on horseback, and takes his place in the little pavilion where for so many years Eugénie used to sit in state, and which has sheltered so many crowned heads under its simple roof. Faure's arrival is the signal for the racing to begin, from that moment the interest goes on increasing until the great "event." Then in an instant the vast throng of human beings breaks up and flows homeward across the Bois, filling the big Place around the Arc de Triomphe, rolling down the Champs Elysées, in twenty parallel lines of carriages. The sidewalks are filled with a laughing, singing, uproarious crowd that quickly invades every restaurant, *café*, or chop-house until their little tables overflow on to the grass and sidewalks, and even into the middle of the streets. Later in the evening the open-air concerts and theatres are packed, and every little square organizes its impromptu ball, the musicians mounted on tables, and the crowd dancing gayly on the wooden pavement until daybreak.

The next day, Paris becomes from a fashionable point of view, "impossible." If you walk through the richer quarters, you will see only long lines of closed windows. The approaches to the railway stations are blocked with cabs piled with trunks and bicycles. The "great world" is fleeing to the seashore or its *châteaux*, and Paris will know it no more until January, for

the French are a country-loving race, and since there has been no court, the aristocracy pass longer and longer periods on their own estates each year, partly from choice and largely to show their disdain for the republic and its entertainments.

The shady drives in the park, which only a day or two ago were so brilliant with smart traps and spring toilets, are become a cool wilderness, where you will meet, perhaps, a few maiden ladies exercising fat dogs, uninterrupted except by the watering-cart or by a few stray tourists in cabs. Now comes a delightful time for the real amateur of Paris and the country around, which is full of charming corners where one can dine at quiet little restaurants, overhanging the water or buried among trees. You are sure of getting the best of attention from the waiters, and the dishes you order receive all the cook's attention. Of an evening the Bois is alive with a myriad of bicycles, their lights twinkling among the trees like many-colored fire-flies. To any one who knows how to live there, Paris is at its best in the last half of June and July. Nevertheless, in a couple of days there will not be an American in Paris, London being the objective point; for we love to be "in at the death," and a coronation, a musical festival, or a big race is sure to attract all our floating population.

The Americans who have the hardest time in Paris are those who try to "run with the deer

and hunt with the hounds," as the French proverb has it, who would fain serve God and Mammon. As anything especially amusing is sure to take place on Sunday in this wicked capital, our friends go through agonies of indecision, their consciences pulling one way, their desire to amuse themselves the other. Some find a middle course, it seems, for yesterday this conversation was overheard on the steps of the American Church:

First American Lady: "Are you going to stop for the sermon?"

Second American Lady: "I am so sorry I can't, but the races begin at one!"

No. 20

"The Treadmill."

A HALF-HUMOROUS, half-pathetic epistle has been sent to me by a woman, who explains in it her particular perplexity. Such letters are the windfalls of our profession! For what is more attractive than to have a woman take you for her lay confessor, to whom she comes for advice in trouble? opening her innocent heart for your inspection!

My correspondent complains that her days are not sufficiently long, nor is her strength great enough, for the thousand and one duties and obligations imposed upon her. "If," she says, "a woman has friends and a small place in the world—and who has not in these days?—she must golf or 'bike' or skate a bit, of a morning; then she is apt to lunch out, or have a friend or two in, to that meal. After luncheon there is sure to be a 'class' of some kind that she has foolishly joined, or a charity meeting, matinée, or reception; but above all, there are her 'duty' calls. She must be home at five to make tea, that she has promised her men friends, and they will not leave until it is time for her to dress for dinner, 'out' or at home, with often the opera, a supper, or a ball to follow. It is quite impossible," she adds, "under these circumstances to apply one's self to anything seri-

ous, to read a book or even open a periodical. The most one can accomplish is a glance at a paper."

Indeed, it would require an exceptional constitution to carry out the above programme, not to mention the attention that a woman must (however reluctantly) give to her house and her family. Where are the quiet hours to be found for self-culture, the perusal of a favorite author, or, perhaps, a little timid "writing" on her own account? Nor does this treadmill round fill a few months only of her life. With slight variations of scene and costume, it continues through the year.

A painter, I know, was fortunate enough to receive, a year or two ago, the commission to paint a well-known beauty. He was delighted with the idea and convinced that he could make her portrait the best work of his life, one that would be the stepping-stone to fame and fortune. This was in the spring. He was naturally burning to begin at once, but found to his dismay that the lady was just about starting for Europe. So he waited, and at her suggestion installed himself a couple of months later at the seaside city where she had a cottage. No one could be more charming than she was, inviting him to dine and drive daily, but when he broached the subject of "sitting," was "too busy just that day." Later in the autumn she would be quite at his disposal. In the autumn, however,

she was visiting, never ten days in the same place. Early winter found her "getting her house in order," a mysterious rite apparently attended with vast worry and fatigue. With cooling enthusiasm, the painter called and coaxed and waited. November brought the opera and the full swing of a New York season. So far she has given him half a dozen sittings, squeezed in between a luncheon, which made her "unavoidably late," for which she is charmingly "sorry," and a reception that she was forced to attend, although "it breaks my heart to leave just as you are beginning to work so well, but I really must, or the tiresome old cat who is giving the tea will be saying all sorts of unpleasant things about me." So she flits off, leaving the poor, disillusioned painter before his canvas, knowing now that his dream is over, that in a month or two his pretty sitter will be off again to New Orleans for the carnival, or abroad, and that his weary round of waiting will recommence. He will be fortunate if some day it does not float back to him, in the mysterious way disagreeable things do come to one, that she has been heard to say, "I fear dear Mr. Palette is not very clever, for I have been sitting to him for over a year, and he has really done nothing yet."

He has been simply the victim of a state of affairs that neither of them were strong enough to break through. It never entered into Beauty's head that she could lead a life different from her

friends. She was honestly anxious to have a successful portrait of herself, but the sacrifice of any of her habits was more than she could make.

Who among my readers (and I am tempted to believe they are all more sensible than the above young woman) has not, during a summer passed with agreeable friends, made a thousand pleasant little plans with them for the ensuing winter,—the books they were to read at the same time, the "exhibitions" they were to see, the visits to our wonderful collections in the Metropolitan Museum or private galleries, cosy little dinners, etc.? And who has not found, as the winter slips away, that few of these charming plans have been carried out? He and his friends have unconsciously fallen back into their ruts of former years, and the pleasant things projected have been brushed aside by that strongest of tyrants, habit.

I once asked a very great lady, whose gracious manner was never disturbed, who floated through the endless complications of her life with smiling serenity, how she achieved this Olympian calm. She was good enough to explain. "I make a list of what I want to do each day. Then, as I find my day passing, or I get behind, or tired, I throw over every other engagement. I could have done them all with hurry and fatigue. I prefer to do one-half and enjoy what I do. If I go to a house, it is to remain and appreciate whatever entertainment has been prepared for me. I never offer

to any hostess the slight of a hurried, *distrait* 'call,' with glances at my watch, and an 'on-the-wing' manner. It is much easier not to go, or to send a card."

This brings me around to a subject which I believe is one of the causes of my correspondent's dilemma. I fear that she never can refuse anything. It is a peculiar trait of people who go about to amuse themselves, that they are always sure the particular entertainment they have been asked to last is going to "be amusing." It rarely is different from the others, but these people are convinced, that to stay away would be to miss something. A weary-looking girl about 1 A. M. (at a house-party) when asked why she did not go to bed if she was so tired, answered, "the nights I go to bed early, they always seem to do something jolly, and then I miss it."

There is no greater proof of how much this weary round wears on women than the acts of the few who feel themselves strong enough in their position to defy custom. They have thrown off the yoke (at least the younger ones have) doubtless backed up by their husbands, for men are much quicker to see the aimlessness of this stupid social routine. First they broke down the great New-Year-call "grind." Men over forty doubtless recall with a shudder, that awful custom which compelled a man to get into his dress clothes at ten A. M., and pass his day rushing about from house to house like a postman. Out-

of-town clubs and sport helped to do away with that remnant of New Amsterdam. Next came the male revolt from the afternoon "tea" or "musical." A black coat is rare now at either of these functions, or if seen is pretty sure to be on a back over fifty. Next, we lords of creation refused to call at all, or leave our cards. A married woman now leaves her husband's card with her own, and sisters leave the "pasteboard" of their brothers and often those of their brothers' friends. Any combination is good enough to "shoot a card."

In London the men have gone a step further. It is not uncommon to hear a young man boast that he never owned a visiting card or made a "duty" call in his life. Neither there nor with us does a man count as a "call" a quiet cup of tea with a woman he likes, and a cigarette and quiet talk until dressing time. Let the young women have courage and take matters into their own hands. (The older ones are hopeless and will go on pushing this Juggernaut car over each other's weary bodies, until the end of the chapter.) Let them have the courage occasionally to "refuse" something, to keep themselves free from aimless engagements, and bring this pasteboard war to a close. If a woman is attractive, she will be asked out all the same, never fear! If she is not popular, the few dozen of "egg-shell extra" that she can manage to slip in at the front doors of her acquaintances will not help her much.

If this matter is, however, so vastly important in women's eyes, why not adopt the continental and diplomatic custom and send cards by post or otherwise? There, if a new-comer dines out and meets twenty-five people for the first time, cards must be left the next day at their twenty-five respective residences. How the cards get there is of no importance. It is a diplomatic fiction that the new acquaintance has called in person, and the call will be returned within twenty-four hours. Think of the saving of time and strength! In Paris, on New Year's Day, people send cards by post to everybody they wish to keep up. That does for a year, and no more is thought about it. All the time thus gained can be given to culture or recreation.

I have often wondered why one sees so few women one knows at our picture exhibitions or flower shows. It is no longer a mystery to me. They are all busy trotting up and down our long side streets leaving cards. Hideous vision! Should Dante by any chance reincarnate, he would find here the material ready made to his hand for an eighth circle in his *Inferno*.

No. 21

"Like Master Like Man."

A FREQUENT and naïve complaint one hears, is of the unsatisfactoriness of servants generally, and their ingratitude and astonishing lack of affection for their masters, in particular. "After all I have done for them," is pretty sure to sum up the long tale of a housewife's griefs. Of all the delightful inconsistencies that grace the female mind, this latter point of view always strikes me as being the most complete. I artfully lead my fair friend on to tell me all about her woes, and she is sure to be exquisitely one-sided and quite unconscious of her position. "They are so extravagant, take so little interest in my things, and leave me at a moment's notice, if they get an idea I am going to break up. Horrid things! I wish I could do without them! They cause me endless worry and annoyance." My friend is very nearly right, —but with whom lies the fault?

The conditions were bad enough years ago, when servants were kept for decades in the same family, descending like heirlooms from father to son, often (abroad) being the foster sisters or brothers of their masters, and bound to the household by an hundred ties of sympathy and tradition. But in our day, and in America, where there is rarely even a common language or na-

tionality to form a bond, and where households are broken up with such facility, the relation between master and servant is often so strained and so unpleasant that we risk becoming (what foreigners reproach us with being), a nation of hotel-dwellers. Nor is this class-feeling greatly to be wondered at. The contrary would be astonishing. From the primitive household, where a poor neighbor comes in as "help," to the "great" establishment where the butler and housekeeper eat apart, and a group of plush-clad flunkies imported from England adorn the entrance-hall, nothing could be better contrived to set one class against another than domestic service.

Proverbs have grown out of it in every language. "No man is a hero to his valet," and "familiarity breeds contempt," are clear enough. Our comic papers are full of the misunderstandings and absurdities of the situation, while one rarely sees a joke made about the other ways that the poor earn their living. Think of it for a moment! To be obliged to attend people at the times of day when they are least attractive, when from fatigue or temper they drop the mask that society glues to their faces so many hours in the twenty-four; to see always the seamy side of life, the small expedients, the aids to nature; to stand behind a chair and hear an acquaintance of your master's ridiculed, who has just been warmly praised to his face; to see a host-

ess who has been graciously urging her guests "not to go so soon," blurt out all her boredom and thankfulness "that those tiresome So-and-So's" are "paid off at last," as soon as the door is closed behind them, must needs give a curious bent to a servant's mind. They see their employers insincere, and copy them. Many a mistress who has been smilingly assured by her maid how much her dress becomes her, and how young she is looking, would be thunderstruck to hear herself laughed at and criticised (none too delicately) five minutes later in that servant's talk.

Servants are trained from their youth up to conceal their true feelings. A domestic who said what she thought would quickly lose her place. Frankly, is it not asking a good deal to expect a maid to be very fond of a lady who makes her sit up night after night until the small hours to unlace her bodice or take down her hair; or imagine a valet can be devoted to a master he has to get into bed as best he can because he is too tipsy to get there unaided? Immortal "Figaro" is the type! Supple, liar, corrupt, intelligent,—he aids his master and laughs at him, feathering his own nest the while. There is a saying that "horses corrupt whoever lives with them." It would be more correct to say that domestic service demoralizes alike both master and man.

Already we are obliged to depend on immigration for our servants because an American

revolts from the false position, though he willingly accepts longer hours or harder work where he has no one around him but his equals. It is the old story of the free, hungry wolf, and the well-fed, but chained, house-dog. The foreigners that immigration now brings us, from countries where great class distinctions exist, find it natural to "serve." With the increase in education and consequent self-respect, the difficulty of getting efficient and contented servants will increase with us. It has already become a great social problem in England. The trouble lies beneath the surface. If a superior class accept service at all, it is with the intention of quickly getting money enough to do something better. With them service is merely the means to an end. A first step on the ladder!

Bad masters are the cause of so much suffering, that to protect themselves, the great brotherhood of servants have imagined a system of keeping run of "places," and giving them a "character" which an aspirant can find out with little trouble. This organization is so complete, and so well carried out, that a household where the lady has a "temper," where the food is poor, or which breaks up often, can rarely get a first-class domestic. The "place" has been boycotted, a good servant will sooner remain idle than enter it. If circumstances are too much for him and he accepts the situation, it is with his eyes open, knowing infinitely more about his new employ-

ers and their failings than they dream of, or than they could possibly find out about him.

One thing never can be sufficiently impressed on people, viz.: that we are forced to live with detectives, always behind us in caps or dress-suits, ready to note every careless word, every incautious criticism of friend or acquaintance—their money matters or their love affairs—and who have nothing more interesting to do than to repeat what they have heard, with embroideries and additions of their own. Considering this, and that nine people out of ten talk quite oblivious of their servants' presence, it is to be wondered at that so little (and not that so much) trouble is made.

It always amuses me when I ask a friend if she is going abroad in the spring, to have her say "Hush!" with a frightened glance towards the door.

"I am; but I do not want the servants to know, or the horrid things would leave me!"

Poor, simple lady! They knew it before you did, and had discussed the whole matter over their "tea" while it was an almost unuttered thought in your mind. If they have not already given you notice, it is because, on the whole, your house suits them well enough for the present, while they look about. Do not worry your simple soul, trying to keep anything from them. They know the amount of your last dressmaker's bill, and the row your husband made over

it. They know how much you would have liked young "Crœsus" for your daughter, and the little tricks you played to bring that marriage about. They know why you are no longer asked to dine at Mrs. Swell's, which is more than you know yourself. Mrs. Swell explained the matter to a few friends over her lunch-table recently, and the butler told your maid that same evening, who was laughing at the story as she put on your slippers!

Before we blame them too much, however, let us remember that they have it in their power to make great trouble if they choose. And considering the little that is made in this way, we must conclude that, on the whole, they are better than we give them credit for being, and fill a trying situation with much good humor and kindliness. The lady who is astonished that they take so little interest in her, will perhaps feel differently if she reflects how little trouble she has given herself to find out their anxieties and griefs, their temptations and heart-burnings; their material situation; whom they support with their slowly earned wages; what claims they have on them from outside. If she will also reflect on the number of days in a year when she is "not herself," when headaches or disappointments ruffle her charming temper, she may come to the conclusion that it is too much to expect all the virtues for twenty dollars a month.

A little more human interest, my good friends,

a little more indulgence, and you will not risk finding yourself in the position of the lady who wrote me that last summer she had been obliged to keep open house for "'Cook' tourists!"

An English Invasion of the Riviera

WHEN sixty years ago Lord Brougham, *en route* for Italy, was thrown from his travelling berline and his leg was broken, near the Italian hamlet of Cannes, the Riviera was as unknown to the polite world as the centre of China. The *grand tour* which every young aristocrat made with his tutor, on coming of age, only included crossing from France into Italy by the Alps. It was the occurrence of an unusually severe winter in Switzerland that turned Brougham aside into the longer and less travelled route *via* the Corniche, the marvellous Roman road at that time fallen into oblivion, and little used even by the local peasantry.

During the tedious weeks while his leg was mending, Lord Brougham amused himself by exploring the surrounding country in his carriage, and was quick to realize the advantages of the climate, and appreciate the marvellous beauty of that coast. Before the broken member was whole again, he had bought a tract of land and begun a villa. Small seed, to furnish such a harvest! To the traveller of to-day the Riviera offers an almost unbroken chain of beautiful residences from Marseilles to Genoa.

A Briton willingly follows where a lord leads, and Cannes became the centre of English fashion, a position it holds to-day in spite of many attractive rivals, and the defection of Victoria who comes now to Cimiez, back of Nice, being unwilling to visit Cannes since the sudden death there of the Duke of Albany. A statue of Lord Brougham, the "discoverer" of the littoral, has been erected in the sunny little square at Cannes, and the English have in many other ways, stamped the city for their own.

No other race carry their individuality with them as they do. They can live years in a country and assimilate none of its customs; on the contrary, imposing habits of their own. It is just this that makes them such wonderful colonizers, and explains why you will find little groups of English people drinking ale and playing golf in the shade of the Pyramids or near the frozen slopes of Foosiyama. The real inwardness of it is that they are a dull race, and, like dull people, despise all that they do not understand. To differ from them is to be in the wrong. They cannot argue with you; they simply know, and that ends the matter.

I had a discussion recently with a Briton on the pronunciation of a word. As there is no "Institute," as in France, to settle matters of this kind, I maintained that we Americans had as much authority for our pronunciation of this particular word as the English. The answer was characteristic.

"I know I am right," said my Island friend, "because that is the way I pronounce it!"

Walking along the principal streets of Cannes to-day, you might imagine yourself (except for the climate) at Cowes or Brighton, so British are the shops and the crowd that passes them. Every restaurant advertises "afternoon tea" and Bass's ale, and every other sign bears a London name. This little matter of tea is particularly characteristic of the way the English have imposed a taste of their own on a rebellious nation. Nothing is further from the French taste than tea-drinking, and yet a Parisian lady will now invite you gravely to "five o'clocker" with her, although I can remember when that beverage was abhorred by the French as a medicine; if you had asked a Frenchman to take a cup of tea, he would have answered:

"Why? I am not ill!"

Even Paris (that supreme and undisputed arbiter of taste) has submitted to English influence; tailor-made dresses and low-heeled shoes have become as "good form" in France as in London. The last two Presidents of the French Republic have taken the oath of office dressed in frock-coats instead of the dress clothes to which French officials formerly clung as to the sacraments.

The municipalities of the little Southern cities were quick to seize their golden opportunity, and everything was done to detain the rich Eng-

lish wandering down towards Italy. Millions were spent in transforming their cramped, dirty, little towns. Wide boulevards bordered with palm and eucalyptus spread their sunny lines in all directions, being baptized *Promenade des Anglais* or *Boulevard Victoria*, in artful flattery. The narrow mountain roads were widened, casinos and theatres built and carnival *fêtes* organized, the cities offering "cups" for yacht- or horse-races, and giving grounds for tennis and golf clubs. Clever Southern people! The money returned to them a hundredfold, and they lived to see their wild coast become the chosen residence of the wealthiest aristocracy in Europe, and the rocky hillsides blossom into terrace above terrace of villa gardens, where palm and rose and geranium vie with the olive and the mimosa to shade the white villas from the sun. To-day, no little town on the coast is without its English chapel, British club, tennis ground, and golf links. On a fair day at Monte Carlo, Nice, or Cannes, the prevailing conversation is in English, and the handsome, well-dressed sons of Albion lounge along beside their astonishing womenkind as thoroughly at home as on Bond Street.

Those wonderful English women are the source of unending marvel and amusement to the French. They can nèver understand them, and small wonder, for with the exception of the small "set" that surrounds the Prince of

Wales, who are dressed in the Parisian fashion, all English women seem to be overwhelmed with regret at not being born men, and to have spent their time and ingenuity since, in trying to make up for nature's mistake. Every masculine garment is twisted by them to fit the female figure; their conversation, like that of their brothers, is about horses and dogs; their hats and gloves are the same as the men's; and when with their fine, large feet in stout shoes they start off, with that particular swinging gait that makes the skirt seem superfluous, for a stroll of twenty miles or so, Englishwomen do seem to the uninitiated to have succeeded in their ambition of obliterating the difference between the sexes.

It is of an evening, however, when concealment is no longer possible, that the native taste bursts forth, the Anglo-Saxon standing declared in all her plainness. Strong is the contrast here, where they are placed side by side with all that Europe holds of elegant, and well-dressed. Frenchwomen, whether of the "world" or the "half-world," are invariably marvels of fitness and freshness, the simplest materials being converted by their skilful touch into toilettes, so artfully adapted to the wearer's figure and complexion, as to raise such "creations" to the level of a fine art.

An artist feels, he must fix on canvas that particular combination of colors or that wonderful line of bust and hip. It is with a shudder

that he turns to the British matron, for she has probably, for this occasion, draped herself in an "art material,"—principally "Liberty" silks of dirty greens and blues (æsthetic shades!). He is tempted to cry out in his disgust: "Oh, Liberty! Liberty! How many crimes are committed in thy name!" It is one of the oddest things in the world that the English should have elected to live so much in France, for there are probably nowhere two peoples so diametrically opposed on every point, or who so persistently and wilfully misunderstand each other, as the English and the French.

It has been my fate to live a good deal on both sides of the Channel, and nothing is more amusing than to hear the absurdities that are gravely asserted by each of their neighbors. To a Briton, a Frenchman will always be "either tiger or monkey" according to Voltaire; while to the French mind English gravity is only hypocrisy to cover every vice. Nothing pleases him so much as a great scandal in England; he will gleefully bring you a paper containing the account of it, to prove how true is his opinion. It is quite useless to explain to the British mind, as I have often tried to do, that all Frenchmen do not pass their lives drinking absinthe on the boulevards; and as Englishmen seem to leave their morals in a valise at Dover when off for a visit to Paris, to be picked up on their return, it is time lost to try to make a Gaul understand

what good husbands and fathers the sons of Albion are.

These two great nations seem to stand in the relation to each other that Rome and Greece held. The English are the conquerors of the world, and its great colonizers; with a vast capital in which wealth and misery jostle each other on the streets; a hideous conglomeration of buildings and monuments, without form and void, very much as old Rome must have been under the Cæsars, enormous buildings without taste, and enormous wealth. The French have inherited the temperament of the Greeks. The drama, painting, and sculpture are the preoccupation of the people. The yearly exhibitions are, for a month before they open, the unique subject of conversation in drawing-room or club. The state protects the artist and buys his work. Their *conservatoires* form the singers, and their schools the painters and architects of Europe and America.

The English copy them in their big way, just as the Romans copied the masterpieces of Greek art, while they despised the authors. It is rare that a play succeeds in Paris which is not instantly translated and produced in London, often with the adapter's name printed on the programme in place of the author's, the Frenchman, who only wrote it, being ignored. Just as the Greeks faded away and disappeared before their Roman conquerors, it is to be feared that

in our day this people of a finer clay will succumb. The "defects of their qualities" will be their ruin. They will stop at home, occupied with literature and art, perfecting their dainty cities; while their tougher neighbors are dominating the globe, imposing their language and customs on the conquered peoples of the earth. One feels this on the Riviera. It reminds you of the cuckoo who, once installed in a robin's nest, that seems to him convenient and warmly located in the sunshine, ends by kicking out all the young robins.

No. 23

A Common Weakness

GOVERNMENTS may change and all the conditions of life be modified, but certain ambitions and needs of man remain immutable. Climates, customs, centuries, have in no way diminished the craving for consideration, the desire to be somebody, to bear some mark indicating to the world that one is not as other men.

For centuries titles supplied the want. This satisfaction has been denied to us, so ambitious souls are obliged to seek other means to feed their vanity.

Even before we were born into the world of nations, an attempt was made amongst the aristocratically minded court surrounding our chief magistrate, to form a society that should (without the name) be the beginning of a class apart.

The order of the Cincinnati was to have been the nucleus of an American nobility. The tendencies of this society are revealed by the fact that primogeniture was its fundamental law. Nothing could have been more opposed to the spirit of the age, nor more at variance with the declaration of our independence, than the insertion of such a clause. This fact was discovered by the far-seeing eye of Washington, and the society was suppressed in the hope (shared by

almost all contemporaries) that with new forms of government the nature of man would undergo a transformation and rise above such puerile ambitions.

Time has shown the fallacy of these dreams. All that has been accomplished is the displacement of the objective point; the desire, the mania for a handle to one's name is as prevalent as ever. Leave the centres of civilization and wander in the small towns and villages of our country. Every other man you meet is introduced as the Colonel or the Judge, and you will do well not to inquire too closely into the matter, nor to ask to see the title-deeds to such distinctions. On the other hand, to omit his prefix in addressing one of these local magnates, would be to offend him deeply. The women-folk were quick to borrow a little of this distinction, and in Washington to-day one is gravely presented to Mrs. Senator Smith or Mrs. Colonel Jones. The climax being reached by one aspiring female who styles herself on her visiting cards, "Mrs. Acting-Assistant-Paymaster Robinson." If by any chance it should occur to any one to ask her motive in sporting such an unwieldy handle, she would say that she did it "because one can't be going about explaining that one is not just ordinary Mrs. Robinson or Thompson, like the thousand others in town." A woman who cannot find an excuse for assuming such a prefix will sometime have recourse to another stratagem, to particularize an

ordinary surname. She remembers that her husband, who ever since he was born has been known to everybody as Jim, is the proud possessor of the middle name Ivanhoe, or Pericles (probably the result of a romantic mother's reading); so one fine day the young couple bloom out as Mr. and Mrs. J. Pericles Sparks, to the amusement of their friends, their own satisfaction, and the hopeless confusion of their tradespeople.

Not long ago a Westerner, who went abroad with a travelling show, was received with enthusiasm in England because it was thought "The Honorable" which preceded his name on his cards implied that although an American he was somehow the son of an earl. As a matter of fact he owed this title to having sat, many years before in the Senate of a far-western State. He will cling to that "Honorable" and print it on his cards while life lasts. I was told the other day of an American carpet warrior who appeared at a court function abroad decorated with every college badge, and football medal in his possession, to which he added at the last moment a brass trunk check, to complete the brilliancy of the effect. This latter decoration attracted the attention of the Heir Apparent, who inquired the meaning of the mystic "416" upon it. This would have been a "facer" to any but a true son of Uncle Sam. Nothing daunted, however, our "General" replied "That, Sir, is the number of pitched battles I have won."

I have my doubts as to the absolute veracity of this tale. But that the son of one of our generals, appeared not long ago at a public reception abroad, wearing his father's medals and decorations, is said to be true. Decorations on the Continent are official badges of distinction conferred and recognized by the different governments. An American who wears, out of his own country, an army or college badge which has no official existence, properly speaking, being recognized by no government, but which is made intentionally to look as much as possible like the "Légion d'Honneur," is deliberately imposing on the ignorance of foreigners, and is but little less of a pretentious idiot than the owners of the trunk check and the borrowed decorations.

There seems no end to the ways a little ambitious game can be played. One device much in favor is for the wife to attach her own family name to that of her husband by means of a hyphen. By this arrangement she does not entirely lose her individuality; as a result we have a splendid assortment of hybrid names, such as Van Cortland-Smith and Beekman-Brown. Be they never so incongruous these double-barrelled cognomens serve their purpose and raise ambitious mortals above the level of other Smiths and Browns. Finding that this arrangement works well in their own case, it is passed on to the next generation. There are no more Toms and Bills in these aspiring days. The little boys are

all Cadwalladers or Carrolls. Their school-fellows, however, work sad havoc with these high-sounding titles and quickly abbreviate them into humble "Cad" or "Rol."

It is surprising to notice what a number of middle-aged gentlemen have blossomed out of late with decorations in their button-holes according to the foreign fashion. On inquiry I have discovered that these ornaments designate members of the G. A. R., the Loyal Legion, or some local Post, for the rosettes differ in form and color. When these gentlemen travel abroad, to reduce their waists or improve their minds, the effects on the hotel waiters and cabmen must be immense. They will be charged three times the ordinary tariff instead of only the double which is the stranger's usual fate at the hands of simple-minded foreigners. The satisfaction must be cheap, however, at that price.

Even our wise men and sages do not seem to have escaped the contagion. One sees professors and clergymen (who ought to set a better example) trailing half a dozen letters after their names, initials which to the initiated doubtless mean something, but which are also intended to fill the souls of the ignorant with envy. I can recall but one case of a foreign decoration being refused by a compatriot. He was a genius and we all know that geniuses are crazy. This gentleman had done something particularly gratifying to an Eastern potentate, who in return offered him

one of his second-best orders. It was at once refused. When urged on him a second time our countryman lost his temper and answered, "If you want to give it to somebody, present it to my valet. He is most anxious to be decorated." And it was done!

It does not require a deeply meditative mind to discover the motives of ambitious struggles. The first and strongest illusion of the human mind is to believe that we are different from our fellows, and our natural impulse is to try and impress this belief upon others.

Pride of birth is but one of the manifestations of the universal weakness—invariably taking stronger and stronger hold of the people, who from the modest dimension of their income, or other untoward circumstances, can find no outward and visible form with which to dazzle the world. You will find that a desire to shine is the secret of most of the tips and presents that are given while travelling or visiting, for they can hardly be attributed to pure spontaneous generosity.

How many people does one meet who talk of their poor and unsuccessful relatives while omitting to mention rich and powerful connections? We are told that far from blaming such a tendency we are to admire it. That it is proper pride to put one's best foot forward and keep an offending member well out of sight, that the man who wears a rosette in the button-hole of

his coat and has half the alphabet galloping after his name, is an honor to his family.

Far be it from me to deride this weakness in others, for in my heart I am persuaded that if I lived in China, nothing would please me more than to have my cap adorned with a coral button, while if fate had cast my life in the pleasant places of central Africa, a ring in my nose would doubtless have filled my soul with joy. The fact that I share this weakness does not, however, prevent my laughing at such folly in others.

No. 24

Changing Paris

PARIS is beginning to show signs of the coming "Exhibition of 1900," and is in many ways going through a curious stage of transformation, socially as well as materially. The *Palais de l'Industrie*, familiar to all visitors here, as the home of the *Salons*, the Horse Shows, and a thousand gay *fêtes* and merry-makings, is being torn down to make way for the new avenue leading, with the bridge Alexander III., from the Champs Elysées to the Esplanade des Invalides. This thoroughfare with the gilded dome of Napoleon's tomb to close its perspective is intended to be the feature of the coming "show."

Curious irony of things in this world! The *Palais de l'Industrie* was intended to be the one permanent building of the exhibition of 1854. An old "Journal" I often read tells how the writer saw the long line of gilded coaches (borrowed from Versailles for the occasion), eight horses apiece, led by footmen—horses and men blazing in embroidered trappings—leave the Tuileries and proceed at a walk to the great gateway of the now disappearing palace. Victoria and Albert who were on an official visit to the Emperor were the first to alight; then Eugénie in the radiance of her perfect beauty

stepped from the coach (sad omen!) that fifty years before had taken Josephine in tears to Malmaison.

It may interest some ladies to know how an Empress was dressed on that spring morning forty-four years ago. She wore rose-colored silk with an over-dress (I think that is what it is called) of black lace flounces, immense hoops, and a black *Chantilly* lace shawl. Her hair, a brilliant golden auburn, was dressed low on the temples, covering the ears, and hung down her back in a gold net almost to her waist; at the extreme back of her head was placed a black and rose-colored bonnet; open "flowing" sleeves showed her bare arms, one-buttoned, straw-colored gloves, and ruby bracelets; she carried a tiny rose-colored parasol not a foot in diameter.

How England's great sovereign was dressed the writer of the journal does not so well remember, for in those days Eugénie was the cynosure of all eyes, and people rarely looked at anything else when they could get a glimpse of her lovely face.

It appears, however, that the Queen sported an India shawl, hoops, and a straw bonnet, which was not particularly becoming to her round face. She and Napoleon entered the building first; the Empress (who was in delicate health) was carried in an open chair, with Prince Albert walking at her side, a marvellously handsome

couple to follow the two little sovereigns who preceded them. The writer had by bribery succeeded in getting places in an *entresol* window under the archway, and was greatly impressed to see those four great ones laughing and joking together over Eugénie's troubles in getting her hoops into the narrow chair!

What changes have come to that laughing group! Two are dead, one dying in exile and disgrace; and it would be hard to find in the two rheumatic old ladies whom one sees pottering about the Riviera now, any trace of those smiling wives. In France it is as if a tidal wave had swept over Napoleon's court. Only the old palace stood severely back from the Champs Elysées, as if guarding its souvenirs. The pick of the mason has brought down the proud gateway which its imperial builder fondly imagined was to last for ages. The Tuileries preceded it into oblivion. The Alpha and Omega of that gorgeous pageant of the fifties vanished like a mirage!

It is not here alone one finds Paris changing. A railway is being brought along the quais with its dépôt at the Invalides. Another is to find its terminus opposite the Louvre, where the picturesque ruin of the Cour des Comptes has stood half-hidden by the trees since 1870. A line of electric cars crosses the Rond Point, in spite of the opposition of all the neighborhood, anxious to keep, at least that fine perspective free from

such desecration. And, last but not least, there is every prospect of an immense system of elevated railways being inaugurated in connection with the coming world's fair. The direction of this kind of improvement is entirely in the hands of the Municipal Council, and that body has become (here in Paris) extremely radical, not to say communistic; and takes pleasure in annoying the inhabitants of the richer quarters of the city, under pretext of improvements and facilities of circulation.

It is easy to see how strong the feeling is against the aristocratic class. Nor is it much to be wondered at! The aristocracy seem to try to make themselves unpopular. They detest the republic, which has shorn them of their splendor, and do everything in their power (socially and diplomatically their power is still great) to interfere with and frustrate the plans of the government. Only last year they seized an opportunity at the funerals of the Duchesse d'Alençon and the Duc d'Aumale to make a royalist manifestation of the most pronounced character. The young Duchesse d'Orleans was publicly spoken of and treated as the "Queen of France;" at the private receptions given during her stay in Paris the same ceremonial was observed as if she had been really on the throne. The young Duke, her husband, was not present, being in exile as a pretender, but armorial bearings of the "reigning family," as their followers

insist on calling them, were hung around the Madeleine and on the funeral-cars of both the illustrious dead.

The government is singularly lenient to the aristocrats. If a poor man cries "Long live the Commune!" in the street, he is arrested. The police, however, stood quietly by and let a group of the old nobility shout "Long live the Queen!" as the train containing the young Duchesse d'Orleans moved out of the station. The secret of this leniency toward the "pretenders" to the throne, is that they are very little feared. If it amuses a set of wealthy people to play at holding a court, the strong government of the republic cares not one jot. The Orleans family have never been popular in France, and the young pretender's marriage to an Austrian Archduchess last year has not improved matters.

It is the fashion in the conservative Faubourg St. Germain, to ridicule the President, his wife and their bourgeois surroundings, as forty years ago the parents of these aristocrats affected to despise the imperial *parvenus*. The swells amused themselves during the official visit of the Emperor and Empress of Russia last year (which was gall and wormwood to them) by exaggerating and repeating all the small slips in etiquette that the President, an intelligent, but simple-mannered gentleman, was supposed to have made during the sojourn of his imperial guests.

Both M. and Mme. Faure are extremely pop-

ular with the people, and are heartily cheered whenever they are seen in public. The President is the despair of the lovers of routine and etiquette, walking in and out of his Palais of the Élysée, like a private individual, and breaking all rules and regulations. He is fond of riding, and jogs off to the Bois of a morning with no escort, and often of an evening drops in at the theatres in a casual way. The other night at the Français he suddenly appeared in the *foyer des artistes* (a beautiful greenroom, hung with historical portraits of great actors and actresses, one of the prides of the theatre) in this informal manner. Mme. Bartet, who happened to be there alone at the time, was so impressed at such an unprecedented event that she fainted, and the President had to run for water and help revive her. The next day he sent the great actress a beautiful vase of Sèvres china, full of water, in souvenir.

To a lover of old things and old ways any changes in the Paris he has known and loved are a sad trial. Henri Drumont, in his delightful *Mon Vieux Paris*, deplores this modern mania for reform which has done such good work in the new quarters but should, he thinks, respect the historic streets and shady squares.

One naturally feels that the sights familiar in youth lose by being transformed and doubts the necessity of such improvements.

The Rome of my childhood is no more! Half of Cairo was ruthlessly transformed in sixty-five

into a hideous caricature of modern Paris. Milan has been remodelled, each city losing in charm as it gained in convenience.

So far Paris has held her own. The spirit of the city has not been lost, as in the other capitals. The fair metropolis of France, in spite of many transformations, still holds her admirers with a dominating sway. She pours out for them a strong elixir that once tasted takes the flavor out of existence in other cities and makes her adorers, when in exile, thirst for another draught of the subtle nectar.

No. 25

Contentment

AS the result of certain ideal standards adopted among us when this country was still in long clothes, a time when the equality of man was the new "fad" of many nations, and the prizes of life first came within the reach of those fortunate or unscrupulous enough to seize them, it became the fashion (and has remained so down to our day) to teach every little boy attending a village school to look upon himself as a possible future President, and to assume that every girl was preparing herself for the position of first lady in the land. This is very well in theory, and practice has shown that, as Napoleon said, "Every private may carry a marshal's baton in his knapsack." Alongside of the good such incentive may produce, it is only fair, however, to consider also how much harm may lie in this way of presenting life to a child's mind.

As a first result of such tall talking we find in America, more than in any other country, an inclination among all classes to leave the surroundings where they were born and bend their energies to struggling out of the position in life occupied by their parents. There are not wanting theorists who hold that this is a quality in a nation, and that it leads to great results. A proposition open to discussion.

It is doubtless satisfactory to designate first magistrates who have raised themselves from humble beginnings to that proud position, and there are times when it is proper to recall such achievements to the rising generation. But as youth is proverbially over-confident it might also be well to point out, without danger of discouraging our sanguine youngsters, that for one who has succeeded, about ten million confident American youths, full of ambition and lofty aims, have been obliged to content themselves with being honest men in humble positions, even as their fathers before them. A sad humiliation, I grant you, for a self-respecting citizen, to end life just where his father did; often the case, nevertheless, in this hard world, where so many fine qualities go unappreciated,—no societies having as yet been formed to seek out "mute, inglorious Miltons," and ask to crown them!

To descend abruptly from the sublime, to very near the ridiculous,—I had need last summer of a boy to go with a lady on a trap and help about the stable. So I applied to a friend's coachman, a hard-working Englishman, who was delighted to get the place for his nephew—an American-born boy—the child of a sister, in great need. As the boy's clothes were hardly presentable, a simple livery was made for him; from that moment he pined, and finally announced he was going to leave. In answer to my surprised inquiries, I discovered that a friend of his from

the same tenement-house in which he had lived in New York had appeared in the village, and sooner than be seen in livery by his play-fellow he preferred abandoning his good place, the chance of being of aid to his mother, and learning an honorable way to earn his living. Remonstrances were in vain; to the wrath of his uncle, he departed. The boy had, at his school, heard so much about everybody being born equal and every American being a gentleman by right of inheritance, that he had taken himself seriously, and despised a position his uncle was proud to hold, preferring elegant leisure in his native tenement-house to the humiliation of a livery.

When at college I had rooms in a neat cottage owned by an American family. The father was a butcher, as were his sons. The only daughter was exceedingly pretty. The hard-worked mother conceived high hopes for this favorite child. She was sent to a boarding-school, from which she returned entirely unsettled for life, having learned little except to be ashamed of her parents and to play on the piano. One of these instruments of torture was bought, and a room fitted up as a parlor for the daughter's use. As the family were fairly well-to-do, she was allowed to dress out of all keeping with her parents' position, and, egged on by her mother, tried her best to marry a rich "student." Failing in this, she became discontented, unhappy, and finally there was a scandal, this poor victim of a

false ambition going to swell the vast tide of a city's vice. With a sensible education, based on the idea that her father's trade was honorable and that her mission in life was to aid her mother in the daily work until she might marry and go to her husband, prepared by experience to cook his dinner and keep his house clean, and finally bring up her children to be honest men and women, this girl would have found a happy future waiting for her, and have been of some good in her humble way.

It is useless to multiply illustrations. One has but to look about him in this unsettled country of ours. The other day in front of my door the perennial ditch was being dug for some gas-pipe or other. Two of the gentlemen who had consented to do this labor wore frock-coats and top hats—or what had once been those articles of attire—instead of comfortable and appropriate overalls. Why? Because, like the stable-boy, to have worn any distinctive dress would have been in their minds to stamp themselves as belonging to an inferior class, and so interfered with their chances of representing this country later at the Court of St. James, or presiding over the Senate,—positions (to judge by their criticism of the present incumbents) they feel no doubt as to their ability to fill.

The same spirit pervades every trade. The youth who shaves me is not a barber; he has only accepted this position until he has time to

do something better. The waiter who brings me my chop at a down-town restaurant would resign his place if he were requested to shave his flowing mustache, and is secretly studying law. I lose all patience with my countrymen as I think over it! Surely we are not such a race of snobs as not to recognize that a good barber is more to be respected than a poor lawyer; that, as a French saying goes, *Il n'y a pas de sot métier*. It is only the fool who is ashamed of his trade.

But enough of preaching. I had intended—when I took up my pen to-day—to write on quite another form of this modern folly, this eternal struggle upward into circles for which the struggler is fitted neither by his birth nor his education; the above was to have been but a preface to the matter I had in mind, viz., "social climbers," those scourges of modern society, the people whom no rebuffs will discourage and no cold shoulder chill, whose efforts have done so much to make our countrymen a byword abroad.

As many philosophers teach that trouble only is positive, happiness being merely relative; that in any case trouble is pretty equally distributed among the different conditions of mankind; that, excepting the destitute and physically afflicted, all God's creatures have a share of joy in their lives, would it not be more logical, as well as more conducive to the general good, if a little more were done to make the young contented

with their lot in life, instead of constantly suggesting to a race already prone to be unsettled, that nothing short of the top is worthy of an American citizen?

No. 26

The Climber

THAT form of misplaced ambition, which is the subject of the preceding chapter, can only be regarded seriously when it occurs among simple and sincere people, who, however deluded, honestly believe that they are doing their duty to themselves and their families when they move heaven and earth to rise a few steps in the world. The moment we find ambition taking a purely social form, it becomes ridiculous. The aim is so paltry in comparison with the effort, and so out of proportion with the energy exerted to attain it, that one can only laugh and wonder! Unfortunately, signs of this puerile spirit (peculiar to the last quarter of the nineteenth century) can be seen on all hands and in almost every society.

That any man or woman should make it the unique aim and object of existence to get into a certain "set," not from any hope of profit or benefit, nor from the belief that it is composed of brilliant and amusing people, but simply because it passes for being exclusive and difficult of access, does at first seem incredible.

That humble young painters or singers should long to know personally the great lights of their professions, and should strive to be accepted among them is easily understood, since the as-

pirants can reap but benefit, present and future, from such companionship. That a rising politician should deem it all-important to be on friendly terms with the "bosses" is not astonishing, for those magnates have it in their power to make or mar his fortune. But in a *milieu* as fluctuating as any social circle must necessarily be, shading off on all sides and changing as constantly as light on water, the end can never be considered as achieved or the goal attained.

Neither does any particular result accompany success, more substantial than the moral one which lies in self-congratulation. That, however, is enough for a climber if she is bitten with the "ascending" madness. (I say "she," because this form of ambition is more frequent among women, although by no means unknown to the sterner sex.)

It amuses me vastly to sit in my corner and watch one of these *fin-de-siècle* diplomatists work out her little problem. She generally comes plunging into our city from outside, hot for conquest, making acquaintances right and left, indiscriminately; thus falling an easy prey to the wolves that prowl around the edges of society, waiting for just such lambs to devour. Her first entertainments are worth attending for she has ingeniously contrived to get together all the people she should have left out, and failed to attract the social lights and powers of the moment. If she be a quick-witted lady, she soon

sees the error of her ways and begins a process of "weeding"—as difficult as it is unwise, each rejected "weed" instantly becoming an enemy for life, not to speak of the risk she, in her ignorance, runs of mistaking for "detrimentals" the *fines fleurs* of the worldly parterre. Ah! the way of the Climber is hard; she now begins to see that her path is not strewn with flowers.

One tactful person of this kind, whose gradual "unfolding" was watched with much amusement and wonder by her acquaintances, avoided all these errors by going in early for a "dear friend." Having, after mature reflection, chosen her guide among the most exclusive of the young matrons, she proceeded quietly to pay her court *en règle*. Flattering little notes, boxes of candy, and bunches of flowers were among the forms her devotion took. As a natural result, these two ladies became inseparable, and the most hermetically sealed doors opened before the new arrival.

A talent for music or acting is another aid. A few years ago an entire family were floated into the desired haven on the waves of the sister's voice, and one young couple achieved success by the husband's aptitude for games and sports. In the latter case it was the man of the family who did the work, dragging his wife up after him. A polo pony is hardly one's idea of a battle-horse, but in this case it bore its rider on to success.

Once climbers have succeeded in installing themselves in the stronghold of their ambitions,

they become more exclusive than their new friends ever dreamed of being, and it tries one's self-restraint to hear these new arrivals deploring "the levelling tendencies of the age," or wondering "how nice people can be beginning to call on those horrid So-and-Sos. Their father sold shoes, you know." This ultra-exclusiveness is not to be wondered at. The only attraction the circle they have just entered has for the climbers is its exclusiveness, and they do not intend that it shall lose its market value in their hands. Like Baudelaire, they believe that "it is only the small number saved that makes the charm of Paradise." Having spent hard cash in this investment, they have every intention of getting their money's worth.

In order to give outsiders a vivid impression of the footing on which they stand with the great of the world, all the women they have just met become Nellys and Jennys, and all the men Dicks and Freds—behind their backs, *bien entendu*—for Mrs. "Newcome" has not yet reached that point of intimacy which warrants using such abbreviations directly to the owners.

Another amiable weakness common to the climber is that of knowing everybody. No name can be mentioned at home or abroad but Parvenu happens to be on the most intimate terms with the owner, and when he is conversing, great names drop out of his mouth as plentifully as did the pearls from the pretty lips of the girl in the fairy

story. All the world knows how such a gentleman, being asked on his return from the East if he had seen "the Dardanelles," answered, "Oh, dear, yes! I dined with them several times!" thus settling satisfactorily his standing in the Orient!

Climbing, like every other habit, soon takes possession of the whole nature. To abstain from it is torture. Napoleon, we are told, found it impossible to rest contented on his successes, but was impelled onward by a force stronger than his volition. In some such spirit the ambitious souls here referred to, after "the Conquest of America" and the discovery that the fruit of their struggles was not worth very much, victory having brought the inevitable satiety in its wake, sail away in search of new fields of adventure. They have long ago left behind the friends and acquaintances of their childhood. Relations they apparently have none, which accounts for the curious phenomenon that a parvenu is never in mourning. As no friendships bind them to their new circle, the ties are easily loosened. Why should they care for one city more than for another, unless it offer more of the sport they love? This continent has become tame, since there is no longer any struggle, while over the sea vast hunting grounds and game worthy of their powder, form an irresistible temptation—old and exclusive societies to be besieged, and contests to be waged compared to which their American

experiences are but light skirmishes. As the polo pony is supposed to pant for the fray, so the hearts of social conquerors warm within them at the prospect of more brilliant victories.

The pleasure of following them on their hunting parties abroad will have to be deferred, so vast is the subject, so full of thrilling adventure and, alas! also of humiliating defeat.

No. 27

The Last of the Dandies

SO completely has the dandy disappeared from among us, that even the word has an old-time look (as if it had strayed out of some half-forgotten novel or "keepsake"), raising in our minds the picture of a slender, clean-shaven youth, in very tight unmentionables strapped under his feet, a dark green frock-coat with a collar up to the ears and a stock whose folds cover his chest, butter-colored gloves, and a hat—oh! a hat that would collect a crowd in two minutes in any neighborhood! A gold-headed stick, and a quizzing glass, with a black ribbon an inch wide, complete the toilet. In such a rig did the swells of the last generation stroll down Pall Mall or drive their tilburys in the Bois.

The recent illness of the Prince de Sagan has made a strange and sad impression in many circles in Paris, for he has always been a favorite, and is the last surviving type of a now extinct species. He is the last Dandy! No understudy will be found to fill his rôle—the dude and the swell are whole generations away from the dandy, of which they are but feeble reflections—the comedy will have to be continued now, without its leading gentleman. With his head of silvery hair, his eye-glass and his wonderful waistcoats, he held the first place in the "high life" of the French capital.

No first night or ball was complete without him, Sagan. The very mention of his name in their articles must have kept the wolf from the door of needy reporters. No *débutante*, social or theatrical, felt sure of her success until it had received the hall-mark of his approval. When he assisted at a dress rehearsal, the actors and the managers paid him more attention than Sarcey or Sardou, for he was known to be the real arbiter of their fate. His word was law, the world bowed before it as before the will of an autocrat. Mature matrons received his dictates with the same reverence that the Old Guard evinced for Napoleon's orders. Had he not led them on to victory in their youth?

On the boulevards or at a race-course, he was the one person always known by sight and pointed out. "There goes Sagan!" He had become an institution. One does not know exactly how or why he achieved the position, which made him the most followed, flattered, and copied man of his day. It certainly was unique!

The Prince of Sagan is descended from Maurice de Saxe (the natural son of the King of Saxony and Aurora of Kœnigsmark), who in his day shone brilliantly at the French court and was so madly loved by Adrienne Lecouvreur. From his great ancestor, Sagan inherited the title of Grand Duke of Courland (the estates have been absorbed into a neighboring empire). Nevertheless, he is still an R. H., and when

crowned heads visit Paris they dine with him and receive him on a footing of equality. He married a great fortune, and the daughter of the banker Sellière. Their house on the Esplanade des Invalides has been for years the centre of aristocratic life in Paris; not the most exclusive circle, but certainly the gayest of this gay capital, and from the days of Louis Philippe he has given the keynote to the fast set.

Oddly enough, he has always been a great favorite with the lower classes (a popularity shared by all the famous dandies of history). The people appear to find in them the personification of all aspirations toward the elegant and the ideal. Alcibiades, Buckingham, the Duc de Richelieu, Lord Seymour, Comte d'Orsay, Brummel, Grammont-Caderousse, shared this favor, and have remained legendary characters, to whom their disdain for everything vulgar, their worship of their own persons, and many costly follies gave an ephemeral empire. Their power was the more arbitrary and despotic in that it was only nominal and undefined, allowing them to rule over the fashions, the tastes, and the pastimes of their contemporaries with undivided sway, making them envied, obeyed, loved, but rarely overthrown.

It has been asserted by some writers that dandies are necessary and useful to a nation (Thackeray admired them and pointed out that they have a most difficult and delicate rôle to

play, hence their rarity), and that these butterflies, as one finds them in the novels of that day, the de Marsys, the Pelhams, the Maxime de Trailles, are indispensable to the perfection of society. It is a great misfortune to a country to have no dandies, those supreme virtuosos of taste and distinction. Germany, which glories in Mozart and Kant, Gœthe and Humboldt, the country of deep thinkers and brave soldiers, never had a great dandy, and so has remained behind England or France in all that constitutes the graceful side of life, the refinements of social intercourse, and the art of living. France will perceive too late, after he has disappeared, the loss she has sustained when this Prince, Grand Seigneur, has ceased to embellish by his presence her race-courses and "first nights." A reputation like his cannot be improvised in a moment, and he has no pupils.

Never did the aristocracy of a country stand in greater need of such a representation, than in these days of tramcars and "fixed-price" restaurants. An entire "art" dies with him. It has been whispered that he has not entirely justified his reputation, that the accounts of his exploits as a *haut viveur* have gained in the telling. Nevertheless he dominated an epoch, rising above the tumultuous and levelling society of his day, a tardy Don Quixote, of the knighthood of pleasures, *fêtes*, loves and prodigalities, which are no longer of our time. His great name, his grand

manner, his elderly graces, his serene carelessness, made him a being by himself. No one will succeed this master of departed elegances. If he does not recover from his attack, if the paralysis does not leave that poor brain, worn out with doing nothing, we can honestly say that he is the last of his kind.

An original and independent thinker has asserted that civilizations, societies, empires, and republics go down to posterity typified for the admiration of mankind, each under the form of some hero. Emerson would have given a place in his Pantheon to Sagan. For it is he who sustained the traditions and became the type of that distinguished and frivolous society, which judged that serious things were of no importance, enthusiasm a waste of time, literature a bore; that nothing was interesting and worthy of occupying their attention except the elegant distractions that helped to pass their days—and nights! He had the merit (?) in these days of the practical and the commonplace, of preserving in his gracious person all the charming uselessness of a courtier in a country where there was no longer a court.

What a strange sight it would be if this departing dandy could, before he leaves for ever the theatre of so many triumphs, take his place at some street corner, and review the shades of the companions his long life had thrown him with, the endless procession of departed belles

and beaux, who, in their youth, had, under his rule, helped to dictate the fashions and lead the sports of a world.

No. 28

A Nation on the Wing

ON being taken the other day through a large and costly residence, with the thoroughness that only the owner of a new house has the cruelty to inflict on his victims, not allowing them to pass a closet or an electric bell without having its particular use and convenience explained, forcing them to look up coal-slides, and down air-shafts and to visit every secret place, from the cellar to the fire-escape, I noticed that a peculiar arrangement of the rooms repeated itself on each floor, and several times on a floor. I remarked it to my host.

"You observe it," he said, with a blush of pride, "it is my wife's idea! The truth is, my daughters are of a marrying age, and my sons starting out for themselves; this house will soon be much too big for two old people to live in alone. We have planned it so that at any time it can be changed into an apartment house at a nominal expense. It is even wired and plumbed with that end in view!"

This answer positively took my breath away. I looked at my host in amazement. It was hard to believe that a man past middle age, who after years of hardest toil could afford to put half a million into a house for himself and his children, and store it with beautiful things, would have

the courage to look so far into the future as to see all his work undone, his home turned to another use and himself and his wife afloat in the world without a roof over their wealthy old heads.

Surely this was the Spirit of the Age in its purest expression, the more strikingly so that he seemed to feel pride rather than anything else in his ingenious combination.

He liked the city he had built in well enough now, but nothing proved to him that he would like it later. He and his wife had lived in twenty cities since they began their brave fight with Fortune, far away in a little Eastern town. They had since changed their abode with each ascending rung of the ladder of success, and beyond a faded daguerreotype or two of their children and a few modest pieces of jewelry, stored away in cotton, it is doubtful if they owned a single object belonging to their early life.

Another case occurs to me. Near the village where I pass my summers, there lived an elderly, childless couple on a splendid estate combining everything a fastidious taste could demand. One fine morning this place was sold, the important library divided between the village and their native city, the furniture sold or given away,—everything went; at the end the things no one wanted were made into a bon-fire and burned.

A neighbor asking why all this was being

done was told by the lady, "We were tired of it all and have decided to be 'Bohemians' for the rest of our lives." This couple are now wandering about Europe and half a dozen trunks contain their belongings.

These are, of course, extreme cases and must be taken for what they are worth; nevertheless, they are straws showing which way the wind blows, signs of the times that he who runs may read. I do not run, but I often saunter up our principal avenue, and always find myself wondering what will be the future of the splendid residences that grace that thoroughfare as it nears the Park; the ascending tide of trade is already circling round them and each year sees one or more crumble away and disappear.

The finer buildings may remain, turned into clubs or restaurants, but the greater part of the newer ones are so ill-adapted to any other use than that for which they are built that their future seems obscure.

That fashion will flit away from its present haunts there can be little doubt; the city below the Park is sure to be given up to business, and even the fine frontage on that green space will sooner or later be occupied by hotels, if not stores; and he who builds with any belief in the permanency of his surroundings must indeed be of a hopeful disposition.

A good lady occupying a delightful corner on this same avenue, opposite a one-story florist's shop, said:

"I shall remain here until they build across the way; then I suppose I shall have to move."

So after all the man who is contented to live in a future apartment house, may not be so very far wrong.

A case of the opposite kind is that of a great millionaire, who, dying, left his house and its collections to his eldest son and his grandson after him, on the condition that they should continue to live in it.

Here was an attempt to keep together a home with its memories and associations. What has been the result? The street that was a charming centre for residences twenty years ago has become a "slum;" the unfortunate heirs find themselves with a house on their hands that they cannot live in and are forbidden to rent or sell. As a final result the will must in all probability be broken and the matter ended.

Of course the reason for a great deal of this is the phenomenal growth of our larger cities. Hundreds of families who would gladly remain in their old homes are fairly pushed out of them by the growth of business.

Everything has its limits and a time must come when our cities will cease to expand or when centres will be formed as in London or Paris, where generations may succeed each other in the same homes. So far, I see no indications of any such crystallization in this our big city; we seem to be condemned like the "Wandering

Jew" or poor little "Joe" to be perpetually "moving on."

At a dinner of young people not long ago a Frenchman visiting our country, expressed his surprise on hearing a girl speak of "not remembering the house she was born in." Piqued by his manner the young lady answered:

"We are twenty-four at this table. I do not believe there is one person here living in the house in which he or she was born." This assertion raised a murmur of dissent around the table; on a census being taken it proved, however, to be true.

How can one expect, under circumstances like these, to find any great respect among young people for home life or the conservative side of existence? They are born as it were on the wing, and on the wing will they live.

The conditions of life in this country, although contributing largely to such a state of affairs, must not be held, however, entirely responsible. Underlying our civilization and culture, there is still strong in us a wild nomadic strain inherited from a thousand generations of wandering ancestors, which breaks out so soon as man is freed from the restraint incumbent on bread-winning for his family. The moment there is wealth or even a modest income insured, comes the inclination to cut loose from the dull routine of business and duty, returning instinctively to the migratory habits of primitive man.

We are not the only nation that has given itself up to globe-trotting; it is strong in the English, in spite of their conservative education, and it is surprising to see the number of formerly stay-at-home French and Germans one meets wandering in foreign lands.

In 1855, a Londoner advertised the plan he had conceived of taking some people over to visit the International Exhibition in Paris. For a fixed sum paid in advance he offered to provide everything and act as courier to the party, and succeeded with the greatest difficulty in getting together ten people. From this modest beginning has grown the vast undertaking that to-day covers the globe with tourists, from the frozen seas where they "do" the midnight sun, to the deserts three thousand miles up the Nile.

As I was returning a couple of years ago *via* Vienna from Constantinople, the train was filled with a party of our compatriots conducted by an agency of this kind—simple people of small means who, twenty years ago, would as soon have thought of leaving their homes for a trip in the East as they would of starting off in balloons en route for the inter-stellar spaces.

I doubted at the time as to the amount of information and appreciation they brought to bear on their travels, so I took occasion to draw one of the thin, unsmiling women into conversation, asking her where they intended stopping next.

"At Buda-Pesth," she answered. I said in some amusement:

"But that was Buda-Pesth we visited so carefully yesterday."

"Oh, was it," she replied, without any visible change on her face, "I thought we had not got there yet." Apparently it was enough for her to be travelling; the rest was of little importance. Later in the day, when asked if she had visited a certain old city in Germany, she told me she had but would never go there again: "They gave us such poor coffee at the hotel." Again later in speaking to her husband, who seemed a trifle vague as to whether he had seen Nuremberg or not, she said:

"Why, you remember it very well; it was there you bought those nice overshoes!"

All of which left me with some doubts in my mind as to the cultivating influences of foreign travel on their minds.

You cannot change a leopard's spots, neither can you alter the nature of a race, and one of the strongest characteristics of the Anglo-Saxon, is the nomadic instinct. How often one hears people say:

"I am not going to sit at home and take care of my furniture. I want to see something of the world before I am too old." Lately, a sprightly maiden of uncertain years, just returned from a long trip abroad, was asked if she intended now to settle down.

"Settle down, indeed! I'm a butterfly and I never expect to settle down."

There is certainly food here for reflection. Why should we be more inclined to wander than our neighbors? Perhaps it is in a measure due to our nervous, restless temperament, which is itself the result of our climate; but whatever the cause is, inability to remain long in one place is having a most unfortunate influence on our social life. When everyone is on the move or longing to be, it becomes difficult to form any but the most superficial ties; strong friendships become impossible, the most intimate family relations are loosened.

If one were of a speculative frame of mind and chose to take as the basis for a calculation the increase in tourists between 1855, when the ten pioneers started for Paris, and the number "personally conducted" over land and sea today, and then glance forward at what the future will be if this ratio of increase is maintained the result would be something too awful for words. For if ten have become a million in forty years, what will be the total in 1955? Nothing less than entire nations given over to sight-seeing, passing their lives and incomes in rushing aimlessly about.

If the facilities of communication increase as they undoubtedly will with the demand, the prospect becomes nearer the idea of a "Walpurgis Night" than anything else. For the earth

and the sea will be covered and the air filled with every form of whirling, flying, plunging device to get men quickly from one place to another.

Every human being on the globe will be flying South for the cold months and North for the hot season.

As personally conducted tours have been so satisfactory, agencies will be started to lead us through all the stages of existence. Parents will subscribe on the birth of their children to have them personally conducted through life and everything explained as it is done at present in the galleries abroad; food, lodging and reading matter, husbands and wives will be provided by contract, to be taken back and changed if unsatisfactory, as the big stores do with their goods. Delightful prospect! Homes will become superfluous, parents and children will only meet when their "tours" happen to cross each other. Our great-grandchildren will float through life freed from every responsibility and more perfectly independent than even that delightful dreamer, Bellamy, ventured to predict.

No. 29

Husks

AMONG the Protestants driven from France by that astute and liberal-minded sovereign Louis XIV., were a colony of weavers, who as all the world knows, settled at Spitalfields in England, where their descendants weave silk to this day.

On their arrival in Great Britain, before the looms could be set up and a market found for their industry, the exiles were reduced to the last extremity of destitution and hunger. Looking about them for anything that could be utilized for food, they discovered that the owners of English slaughter-houses threw away as worthless, the tails of the cattle they killed. Like all the poor in France, these wanderers were excellent cooks, and knew that at home such caudal appendages were highly valued for the tenderness and flavor of the meat. To the amazement and disgust of the English villagers, the new arrivals proceeded to collect this "refuse" and carry it home for food. As the first principle of French culinary art is the *pot-au-feu*, the tails were mostly converted into soup, on which the exiles thrived and feasted.

Their neighbors, envious at seeing the despised French indulging daily in savory dishes, unknown to English palates, and tempted like

"Jack's" giant by the smell of "fresh meat," began to inquire into the matter, and slowly realized how, in their ignorance, they had been throwing away succulent and delicate food. The news of this discovery gradually spreading through all classes, "ox-tail" became and has remained the national English soup.

If this veracious tale could be twisted into a metaphor, it would serve marvellously to illustrate the position of the entire Anglo-Saxon race, and especially that of their American descendants as regards the Latin peoples. For foolish prodigality and reckless, ignorant extravagance, however, we leave our English cousins far behind.

Two American hotels come to my mind, as different in their appearance and management as they are geographically asunder. Both are types and illustrations of the wilful waste that has recently excited Mr. Ian Maclaren's comment, and the woeful want (of good food) that is the result. At one, a dreary shingle construction on a treeless island, off our New England coast, where the ideas of the landlord and his guests have remained as unchanged and primitive as the island itself, I found on inquiry that all articles of food coming from the first table were thrown into the sea; and I have myself seen chickens hardly touched, rounds of beef, trays of vegetables, and every variety of cake and dessert tossed to the fish.

While we were having soups so thin and tasteless that they would have made a French housewife blush, the ingredients essential to an excellent "stock" were cast aside. The boarders were paying five dollars a day and appeared contented, the place was packed, the landlord coining money, so it was foolish to expect any improvement.

The other hotel, a vast caravansary in the South, where a fortune had been lavished in providing every modern convenience and luxury, was the "fad" of its wealthy owner. I had many talks with the manager during my stay, and came to realize that most of the wastefulness I saw around me was not his fault, but that of the public, to whose taste he was obliged to cater. At dinner, after receiving your order, the waiter would disappear for half an hour, and then bring your entire meal on one tray, the over-cooked meats stranded in lakes of coagulated gravy, the entrées cold and the ices warm. He had generally forgotten two or three essentials, but to send back for them meant to wait another half-hour, as his other clients were clamoring to be served. So you ate what was before you in sulky disgust, and got out of the room as quickly as possible.

After one of these gastronomic races, being hungry, flustered, and suffering from indigestion, I asked mine host if it had never occurred to him to serve a *table d'hôte* dinner (in courses)

as is done abroad, where hundreds of people dine at the same moment, each dish being offered them in turn accompanied by its accessories.

"Of course, I have thought of it," he answered. "It would be the greatest improvement that could be introduced into American hotel-keeping. No one knows better than I do how disastrous the present system is to all parties. Take as an example of the present way, the dinner I am going to give you to-morrow, in honor of Christmas. Glance over this *menu*. You will see that it enumerates every costly and delicate article of food possible to procure and a long list of other dishes, the greater part of which will not even be called for. As no number of *chefs* could possibly oversee the proper preparation of such a variety of meats and sauces, all will be carelessly cooked, and as you know by experience, poorly served.

"People who exact useless variety," he added, "are sure in some way to be the sufferers; in their anxiety to try everything, they will get nothing worth eating. Yet that meal will cost me considerably more than my guests pay for their twenty-four hours' board and lodging.

"Why do it, you ask? Because it is the custom, and because it will be an advertisement. These bills of fare will be sown broadcast over the country in letters to friends and kept as souvenirs. If, instead of all this senseless superfluity, I were allowed to give a *table d'hôte* meal to-mor-

row, with the *chef* I have, I could provide an exquisite dinner, perfect in every detail, served at little tables as deftly and silently as in a private house. I could also discharge half of my waiters, and charge two dollars a day instead of five dollars, and the hotel would become (what it has never been yet) a paying investment, so great would be the saving.

"Only this morning," he continued, warming to his subject, "while standing in the dining-room, I saw a young man order and then send away half the dishes on the *menu*. A chicken was broiled for him and rejected; a steak and an omelette fared no better. How much do you suppose a hotel gains from a guest like that?

"The reason Americans put up with such poor viands in hotels is, that home cooking in this country is so rudimentary, consisting principally of fried dishes, and hot breads. So little is known about the proper preparation of food that to-morrow's dinner will appear to many as the *ne plus ultra* of delicate living. One of the charms of a hotel for people who live poorly at home, lies in this power to order expensive dishes they rarely or never see on their own tables.

"To be served with a quantity of food that he has but little desire to eat is one of an American citizen's dearest privileges, and a right he will most unwillingly relinquish. He may know as well as you and I do, that what he calls for will not be worth eating; that is of secondary

importance, he has it before him, and is contented.

"The hotel that attempted limiting the liberty of its guests to the extent of serving them a *table d'hôte* dinner, would be emptied in a week.

"A crowning incongruity, as most people are delighted to dine with friends, or at public functions, where the meal is invariably served *à la russe* (another name for a *table d'hôte*), and on these occasions are only too glad to have their *menu* chosen for them. The present way, however, is a remnant of 'old times' and the average American, with all his love of change and novelty, is very conservative when it comes to his table."

What this manager did not confide to me, but what I discovered later for myself, was that to facilitate the service, and avoid confusion in the kitchens, it had become the custom at all the large and most of the small hotels in this country, to carve the joints, cut up the game, and portion out vegetables, an hour or two before meal time. The food, thus arranged, is placed in vast steam closets, where it simmers gayly for hours, in its own, and fifty other vapors.

Any one who knows the rudiments of cookery, will recognize that with this system no viand can have any particular flavor, the partridges having a taste of their neighbor the roast beef, which in turn suggests the plum pudding it has been "chumming" with.

It is not alone in a hotel that we miss the good in grasping after the better. Small housekeeping is apparently run on the same lines.

A young Frenchman, who was working in my rooms, told me in reply to a question regarding prices, that every kind of food was cheaper here than abroad, but the prejudice against certain dishes was so strong in this country that many of the best things in the markets were never called for. Our nation is no longer in its "teens" and should cease to act like a foolish boy who has inherited (what appears to him) a limitless fortune; not for fear of his coming, like his prototype in the parable, to live on "husks" for he is doing that already, but lest like the dog of the fable, in grasping after the shadow of a banquet he miss the simple meal that is within his reach.

One of the reasons for this deplorable state of affairs lies in the foolish education our girls receive. They learn so little housekeeping at home, that when married they are obliged to begin all over again, unless they prefer, like a majority of their friends, to let things go at the will and discretion of the "lady" below stairs.

At both hotels I have referred to, the families of the men interested considered it beneath them to know what was taking place. The "daughter" of the New England house went semi-weekly to Boston to take violin lessons at ten dollars each, although she had no intention of becoming

a professional, while the wife wrote poetry and ignored the hotel side of her life entirely.

The "better half" of the Florida establishment hired a palace in Rome and entertained ambassadors. Hotels divided against themselves are apt to be establishments where you pay for riotous living and are served only with husks.

We have many hard lessons ahead of us, and one of the hardest will be for our nation to learn humbly from the thrifty emigrants on our shores, the great art of utilizing the "tails" that are at this moment being so recklessly thrown away.

As it is, in spite of markets overflowing with every fish, vegetable, and tempting viand, we continue to be the worst fed, most meagrely nourished of all the wealthy nations on the face of the earth. We have a saying (for an excellent reason unknown on the Continent) that Providence provides us with food and the devil sends the cooks! It would be truer to say that the poorer the food resources of a nation, the more restricted the choice of material, the better the cooks; a small latitude when providing for the table forcing them to a hundred clever combinations and mysterious devices to vary the monotony of their cuisine and tempt a palate, by custom staled.

Our heedless people, with great variety at their disposition, are unequal to the situation, wasting and discarding the best, and making absolutely nothing of their advantages.

If we were enjoying our prodigality by living on the fat of the land, there would be less reason to reproach ourselves, for every one has a right to live as he pleases. But as it is, our foolish prodigals are spending their substance, while eating the husks!

No. 30

The *Faubourg St. Germain*

THERE has been too much said and written in the last dozen years about breaking down the "great wall" behind which the aristocrats of the famous Faubourg, like the Celestials, their prototypes, have ensconced themselves. The Chinese speak of outsiders as "barbarians." The French ladies refer to such unfortunates as being "beyond the pale." Almost all that has been written is arrant nonsense; that imaginary barrier exists to-day on as firm a foundation, and is guarded by sentinels as vigilant as when, forty years ago, Napoleon (third of the name) and his Spanish spouse mounted to its assault.

Their repulse was a bitter humiliation to the *parvenue* Empress, whose resentment took the form (along with many other curious results) of opening the present Boulevard St. Germain, its line being intentionally carried through the heart of that quarter, teeming with historic "Hotels" of the old aristocracy, where beautiful constructions were mercilessly torn down to make way for the new avenue. The cajoleries which Eugénie first tried and the blows that followed were alike unavailing. Even her worship of Marie Antoinette, between whom and herself she found imaginary resemblances, failed

to warm the stony hearts of the proud old ladies, to whom it was as gall and wormwood to see a nobody crowned in the palace of their kings. Like religious communities, persecution only drew this old society more firmly together and made them stand by each other in their distress. When the Bois was remodelled by Napoleon and the lake with its winding drive laid out, the new Court drove of an afternoon along this water front. That was enough for the old swells! They retired to the remote "Allée of the Acacias," and solemnly took their airing away from the bustle of the new world, incidentally setting a fashion that has held good to this day; the lakeside being now deserted, and the "Acacias" crowded of an afternoon, by all that Paris holds of elegant and inelegant.

Where the brilliant Second Empire failed, the Republic had little chance of success. With each succeeding year the "Old Faubourg" withdrew more and more into its shell, going so far, after the fall of MacMahon, as to change its "season" to the spring, so that the balls and *fêtes* it gave should not coincide with the "official" entertainments during the winter.

The next people to have a "shy" at the "Old Faubourg's" Gothic battlements were the Jews, who were victorious in a few light skirmishes and succeeded in capturing one or two illustrious husbands for their daughters. The wily Israelites, however, discovered that titled sons-

in-law were expensive articles and often turned out unsatisfactorily, so they quickly desisted. The English, the most practical of societies, have always left the Faubourg alone. It has been reserved for our countrywomen to lay the most determined siege yet recorded to that untaken stronghold.

It is a characteristic of the American temperament to be unable to see a closed door without developing an intense curiosity to know what is behind; or to read "No Admittance to the Public" over an entrance without immediately determining to get inside at any price. So it is easy to understand the attraction an hermetically sealed society would have for our fair compatriots. Year after year they have flung themselves against its closed gateways. Repulsed, they have retired only to form again for the attack, but are as far away to-day from planting their flag in that citadel as when they first began. It does not matter to them what is inside; there may be (as in this case) only mouldy old halls and a group of people with antiquated ideas and ways. It is enough for a certain type of woman to know that she is not wanted in an exclusive circle, to be ready to die in the attempt to get there. This point of view reminds one of Mrs. Snob's saying about a new arrival at a hotel: "I am sure she must be 'somebody' for she was so rude to me when I spoke to her;" and her answer to her daughter when the girl said (on arriv-

ing at a watering-place) that she had noticed a very nice family "who look as if they wanted to know us, Mamma:"

"Then, my dear," replied Mamma Snob, "they certainly are not people we want to meet!"

The men in French society are willing enough to make acquaintance with foreigners. You may see the youth of the Faubourg dancing at American balls in Paris, or running over for occasional visits to this country. But when it comes to taking their women-kind with them, it is a different matter. Americans who have known well-born Frenchmen at school or college are surprised, on meeting them later, to be asked (cordially enough) to dine *en garçon* at a restaurant, although their Parisian friend is married. An Englishman's or American's first word would be on a like occasion:

"Come and dine with me to-night. I want to introduce you to my wife." Such an idea would never cross a Frenchman's mind!

One American I know is a striking example of this. He was born in Paris, went to school and college there, and has lived in that city all his life. His sister married a French nobleman. Yet at this moment, in spite of his wealth, his charming American wife, and many beautiful entertainments, he has not one warm French friend, or the *entrée* on a footing of intimacy to a single Gallic house.

There is no analogy between the English aris-

tocracy and the French nobility, except that they are both antiquated institutions; the English is the more harmful on account of its legislative power, the French is the more pretentious. The House of Lords is the most open club in London, the payment of an entrance-fee in the shape of a check to a party fund being an all-sufficient sesame. In France, one must be born in the magic circle. The spirit of the Emigration of 1793 is not yet extinct. The nobles live in their own world (how expressive the word is, seeming to exclude all the rest of mankind), pining after an impossible *restauration*, alien to the present day, holding aloof from politics for fear of coming in touch with the masses, with whom they pride themselves on having nothing in common.

What leads many people astray on this subject is that there has formed around this ancient society a circle composed of rich "outsiders," who have married into good families; and of eccentric members of the latter, who from a love of excitement or for interested motives have broken away from their traditions. Newly arrived Americans are apt to mistake this "world" for the real thing. Into this circle it is not difficult for foreigners who are rich and anxious to see something of life to gain admission. To be received by the ladies of this outer circle, seems to our compatriots to be an achievement, until they learn the real standing of their new acquaintances.

No gayer houses, however, exist than those of

the new set. At their city or country houses, they entertain continually, and they are the people one meets toward five o'clock, on the grounds of the Polo Club, in the Bois, at *fêtes* given by the Island Club of Puteaux, attending the race meetings, or dining at American houses. As far as amusement and fun go, one might seek much further and fare worse.

It is very, very rare that foreigners get beyond this circle. Occasionally there is a marriage between an American girl and some Frenchman of high rank. In these cases the girl is, as it were, swallowed up. Her family see little of her, she rarely appears in general society, and, little by little, she is lost to her old friends and relations. I know of several cases of this kind where it is to be doubted if a dozen Americans outside of the girls' connections know that such women exist. The fall in rents and land values has made the French aristocracy poor; it is only by the greatest economy (and it never entered into an American mind to conceive of such economy as is practised among them) that they succeed in holding on to their historical châteaux or beautiful city residences; so that pride plays a large part in the isolation in which they live.

The fact that no titles are recognized officially by the French government (the most they can obtain being a "courtesy" recognition) has placed these people in a singularly false position. An American girl who has married a Duke is a

good deal astonished to find that she is legally only plain "Madame So and So;" that when her husband does his military service there is no trace of the high-sounding title to be found in his official papers. Some years ago, a colonel was rebuked because he allowed the Duc d'Alençon to be addressed as "Monseigneur" by the other officers of his regiment. This ought to make ambitious papas reflect, when they treat themselves to titled sons-in-law. They should at least try and get an article recognized by the law.

Most of what is written here is perfectly well known to resident Americans in Paris, and has been the cause of gradually splitting that once harmonious settlement into two perfectly distinct camps, between which no love is lost. The members of one, clinging to their countrymen's creed of having the best or nothing, have been contented to live in France and know but few French people, entertaining among themselves and marrying their daughters to Americans. The members of the other, who have "gone in" for French society, take what they can get, and, on the whole, lead very jolly lives. It often happens (perhaps it is only a coincidence) that ladies who have not been very successful at home are partial to this circle, where they easily find guests for their entertainments and the recognition their souls long for.

What the future of the "Great Faubourg" will be, it is hard to say. All hope of a possible

restauration appears to be lost. Will the proud necks that refused to bend to the Orleans dynasty or the two "empires" bow themselves to the republican yoke? It would seem as if it must terminate in this way, for everything in this world must finish. But the end is not yet; one cannot help feeling sympathy for people who are trying to live up to their traditions and be true to such immaterial idols as "honor" and "family" in this discouragingly material age, when everything goes down before the Golden Calf. Nor does one wonder that men who can trace their ancestors back to the Crusades should hesitate to ally themselves with the last rich *parvenu* who has raised himself from the gutter, or resent the ardor with which the latest importation of American ambition tries to chum with them and push its way into their life.

No. 31

Men's Manners

NOTHING makes one feel so old as to wake up suddenly, as it were, and realize that the conditions of life have changed, and that the standards you knew and accepted in your youth have been raised or lowered. The young men you meet have somehow become uncomfortably polite, offering you armchairs in the club, and listening with a shade of deference to your stories. They are of another generation; their ways are not your ways, nor their ambitions those you had in younger days. One is tempted to look a little closer, to analyze what the change is, in what this subtle difference consists, which you feel between your past and their present. You are surprised and a little angry to discover that, among other things, young men have better manners than were general among the youths of fifteen years ago.

Any one over forty can remember three epochs in men's manners. When I was a very young man, there were still going about in society a number of gentlemen belonging to what was reverently called the "old school," who had evidently taken Sir Charles Grandison as their model, read Lord Chesterfield's letters to his son with attention, and been brought up to commence letters to their fathers, "Honored Parent," signing

themselves "Your humble servant and respectful son." There are a few such old gentlemen still to be found in the more conservative clubs, where certain windows are tacitly abandoned to these elegant-mannered fossils. They are quite harmless unless you happen to find them in a reminiscent mood, when they are apt to be a little tiresome; it takes their rusty mental machinery so long to get working! Washington possesses a particularly fine collection among the retired army and navy officers and ex-officials. It is a fact well known that no one drawing a pension ever dies.

About 1875, a new generation with new manners began to make its appearance. A number of its members had been educated at foreign universities, and came home burning to upset old ways and teach their elders how to live. They broke away from the old clubs and started smaller and more exclusive circles among themselves, principally in the country. This was a period of bad manners. True to their transatlantic model, they considered it "good form" to be uncivil and to make no effort towards the general entertainment when in society. Not to speak more than a word or two during a dinner party to either of one's neighbors was the supreme *chic*. As a revolt from the twice-told tales of their elders they held it to be "bad form" to tell a story, no matter how fresh and amusing it might be. An unfortunate outsider who ventured to tell

one in their club was crushed by having his tale received in dead silence. When it was finished one of the party would "ring the bell," and the circle order drinks at the expense of the man who had dared to amuse them. How the professional story-teller must have shuddered—he whose story never was ripe until it had been told a couple of hundred times, and who would produce a certain tale at a certain course as surely as clock-work.

That the story-telling type was a bore, I grant. To be grabbed on entering your club and obliged to listen to Smith's last, or to have the conversation after dinner monopolized by Jones and his eternal "Speaking of coffee, I remember once," etc., added an additional hardship to existence. But the opposite pose, which became the fashion among the reformers, was hardly less wearisome. To sit among a group of perfectly mute men, with an occasional word dropping into the silence like a stone in a well, was surely little better.

A girl told me she had once sat through an entire cotillion with a youth whose only remark during the evening had been (after absorbed contemplation of the articles in question), "How do you like my socks?"

On another occasion my neighbor at table said to me:

"I think the man on my right has gone to sleep. He is sitting with his eyes closed!" She

was mistaken. He was practising his newly acquired "repose of manner," and living up to the standard of his set.

The model young man of that period had another offensive habit, his pose of never seeing you, which got on the nerves of his elders to a considerable extent. If he came into a drawing-room where you were sitting with a lady, he would shake hands with her and begin a conversation, ignoring your existence, although you may have been his guest at dinner the night before, or he yours. This was also a tenet of his creed borrowed from trans-Atlantic cousins, who, by the bye, during the time I speak of, found America, and especially our Eastern states, a happy hunting-ground,—all the clubs, country houses, and society generally opening their doors to the "sesame" of English nationality. It took our innocent youths a good ten years to discover that there was little reciprocity in the arrangement; it was only in the next epoch (the last of the three referred to) that our men recovered their self-respect, and assumed towards foreigners in general the attitude of polite indifference which is their manner to us when abroad. Nothing could have been more provincial and narrow than the ideas of our "smart" men at that time. They congregated in little cliques, huddling together in public, and cracking personal old jokes; but were speechless with *mauvaise honte* if thrown among foreigners or into

other circles of society. All this is not to be wondered at considering the amount of their general education and reading. One charming little custom then greatly in vogue among our *jeunesse dorée* was to remain at a ball, after the other guests had retired, get tipsy, and then break anything that came to hand. It was so amusing to throw china, glass, or valuable plants, out of the windows, to strip to the waist and box or bait the tired waiters.

I look at the boys growing up around me with sincere admiration, they are so superior to their predecessors in breeding, in civility, in deference to older people, and in a thousand other little ways that mark high-bred men. The stray Englishman, of no particular standing at home no longer finds our men eager to entertain him, to put their best "hunter" at his disposition, to board, lodge, and feed him indefinitely, or make him honorary member of all their clubs. It is a constant source of pleasure to me to watch this younger generation, so plainly do I see in them the influence of their mothers—women I knew as girls, and who were so far ahead of their brothers and husbands in refinement and culture. To have seen these girls marry and bring up their sons so well has been a satisfaction and a compensation for many disillusions. Woman's influence will always remain the strongest lever that can be brought to bear in raising the tone of a family; it is impossible not to see about

these young men a reflection of what we found so charming in their mothers. One despairs at times of humanity, seeing vulgarity and snobbishness riding triumphantly upward; but where the tone of the younger generation is as high as I have lately found it, there is still much hope for the future.

No. 32

An Ideal Hostess

THE saying that "One-half of the world ignores how the other half lives" received for me an additional confirmation this last week, when I had the good fortune to meet again an old friend, now for some years retired from the stage, where she had by her charm and beauty, as well as by her singing, held all the Parisian world at her pretty feet.

Our meeting was followed on her part by an invitation to take luncheon with her the next day, "to meet a few friends, and talk over old times." So half-past twelve (the invariable hour for the "second breakfast," in France) the following day found me entering a shady drawing-room, where a few people were sitting in the cool half-light that strayed across from a canvas-covered balcony furnished with plants and low chairs. Beyond one caught a glimpse of perhaps the gayest picture that the bright city of Paris offers,—the sweep of the Boulevard as it turns to the Rue Royale, the flower market, gay with a thousand colors in the summer sunshine, while above all the color and movement, rose, cool and gray, the splendid colonnade of the Madeleine. The rattle of carriages, the roll of the heavy omnibuses and the shrill cries from the street below floated up, softened into a harmoni-

ous murmur that in no way interfered with our conversation, and is sweeter than the finest music to those who love their Paris.

Five or six rooms *en suite* opening on the street, and as many more on a large court, formed the apartment, where everything betrayed the *artiste* and the singer. The walls, hung with silk or tapestry, held a collection of original drawings and paintings, a fortune in themselves; the dozen portraits of our hostess in favorite rôles were by men great in the art world; a couple of pianos covered with well-worn music and numberless photographs signed with names that would have made an autograph-fiend's mouth water.

After a gracious, cooing welcome, more whispered than spoken, I was presented to the guests I did not know. Before this ceremony was well over, two maids in black, with white caps, opened a door into the dining-room and announced luncheon. As this is written on the theme that "people know too little how their neighbors live," I give the *menu*. It may amuse my readers and serve, perhaps, as a little object lesson to those at home who imagine that quantity and not quality is of importance.

Our gracious hostess had earned a fortune in her profession (and I am told that two *chefs* preside over her simple meals); so it was not a spirit of economy which dictated this simplicity. At first, *hors d'œuvres* were served,—all sorts of tempting little things,—very thin slices of ham,

spiced sausages, olives and caviar, and eaten—not merely passed and refused. Then came the one hot dish of the meal. "One!" I think I hear my reader exclaim. Yes, my friend, but that one was a marvel in its way. Chicken *a l'espagnole*, boiled, and buried in rice and tomatoes cooked whole—a dish to be dreamed of and remembered in one's prayers and thanksgivings! After at least two helpings each to this *chef-d'œuvre*, cold larded fillet and a meat *pâté* were served with the salad. Then a bit of cheese, a beaten cream of chocolate, fruit, and bon-bons. For a drink we had the white wine from which champagne is made (by a chemical process and the addition of many injurious ingredients); in other words, a pure *brut* champagne with just a suggestion of sparkle at the bottom of your glass. All the party then migrated together into the smoking-room for cigarettes, coffee, and a tiny glass of *liqueur*.

These details have been given at length, not only because the meal seemed to me, while I was eating it, to be worthy of whole columns of print, but because one of the besetting sins of our dear land is to serve a profusion of food no one wants and which the hostess would never have dreamed of ordering had she been alone.

Nothing is more wearisome than to sit at table and see course after course, good, bad, and indifferent, served, after you have eaten what you want. And nothing is more vulgar than to serve

them; for either a guest refuses a great deal of the food and appears uncivil, or he must eat, and regret it afterwards. If we ask people to a meal, it should be to such as we eat, as a general thing, ourselves, and such as they would have at home. Otherwise it becomes ostentation and vulgarity. Why should one be expected to eat more than usual because a friend has been nice enough to ask one to take one's dinner with him, instead of eating it alone? It is the being among friends that tempts, not the food; the fact that skilful waiters have been able to serve a dozen varieties of fish, flesh, and fowl during the time you were at table has added little to any one's pleasure. On the contrary! Half the time one eats from pure absence of mind, a number of most injurious mixtures and so prepares an awful to-morrow and the foundation of many complicated diseases.

I see Smith and Jones daily at the club, where we dine cheerfully together on soup, a cut of the joint, a dessert, and drink a pint of claret. But if either Mrs. Smith or Mrs. Jones asks me to dinner, we have eight courses and half as many wines, and Smith will say quite gravely to me, "Try this '75 'Perrier Jouët,'" as if he were in the habit of drinking it daily. It makes me smile, for he would as soon think of ordering a bottle of that wine at the club as he would think of ordering a flask of nectar.

But to return to our "mutton." As we had

none of us eaten too much (and so become digesting machines), we were cheerful and sprightly. A little music followed and an author repeated some of his poetry. I noticed that during the hour before we broke up our hostess contrived to have a little talk with each of her guests, which she made quite personal, appearing for the moment as though the rest of the world did not exist for her, than which there is no more subtle flattery, and which is the act of a well-bred and appreciative woman. Guests cannot be treated *en masse* any more than food; to ask a man to your house is not enough. He should be made to feel, if you wish him to go away with a pleasant remembrance of the entertainment, that his presence has in some way added to it and been a personal pleasure to his host.

A good soul that all New York knew a few years ago, whose entertainments were as though the street had been turned into a *salon* for the moment, used to go about among her guests saying, "There have been one hundred and seventy-five people here this Thursday, ten more than last week," with such a satisfied smile, that you felt that she had little left to wish for, and found yourself wondering just which number you represented in her mind. When you entered she must have murmured a numeral to herself as she shook your hand.

There is more than one house in New York where I have grave doubts if the host and host-

ess are quite sure of my name when I dine there; after an abstracted welcome, they rarely put themselves out to entertain their guests. Black coats and evening dresses alternate in pleasing perspective down the long line of their table. Their gold plate is out, and the *chef* has been allowed to work his own sweet will, so they give themselves no further trouble.

Why does not some one suggest to these amphitrions to send fifteen dollars in prettily monogrammed envelopes to each of their friends, requesting them to expend it on a dinner. The compliment would be quite as personal, and then the guests might make up little parties to suit themselves, which would be much more satisfactory than going "in" with some one chosen at hazard from their host's visiting list, and less fatiguing to that gentleman and his family.

No. 33

The Introducer

WE all suffer more or less from the perennial "freshness" of certain acquaintances—tiresome people whom a misguided Providence has endowed with overflowing vitality and an irrepressible love of their fellowmen, and who, not content with looking on life as a continual "spree," insist on making others happy in spite of themselves. Their name is legion and their presence ubiquitous, but they rarely annoy as much as when disguised under the mask of the "Introducer." In his clutches one is helpless. It is impossible to escape from such philanthropic tyranny. He, in his freshness, imagines that to present human beings to each other is his mission in this world and moves through life making these platonic unions, oblivious, as are other match-makers, of the misery he creates.

If you are out for a quiet stroll, one of these genial gentlemen is sure to come bounding up, and without notice or warning present you to his "friend,"—the greater part of the time a man he has met only an hour before, but whom he endows out of the warehouse of his generous imagination with several talents and all the virtues. In order to make the situation just one

shade more uncomfortable, this kindly bore proceeds to sing a hymn of praise concerning both of you to your faces, adding, in order that you may both feel quite friendly and pleasant:

"I know you two will fancy each other, you are so alike,"—a phrase neatly calculated to nip any conversation in the bud. You detest the unoffending stranger on the spot and would like to kill the bore. Not to appear an absolute brute you struggle through some commonplace phrases, discovering the while that your new acquaintance is no more anxious to know you, than you are to meet him; that he has not the slightest idea who you are, neither does he desire to find out. He classes you with the bore, and his one idea, like your own, is to escape. So that the only result of the Introducer's good-natured interference has been to make two fellow-creatures miserable.

A friend was telling me the other day of the martyrdom he had suffered from this class. He spoke with much feeling, as he is the soul of amiability, but somewhat short-sighted and afflicted with a hopelessly bad memory for faces. For the last few years, he has been in the habit of spending one or two of the winter months in Washington, where his friends put him up at one club or another. Each winter on his first appearance at one of these clubs, some kindly disposed old fogy is sure to present him to a circle of the members, and he finds himself in-

discriminately shaking hands with Judges and Colonels. As little or no conversation follows these introductions to fix the individuality of the members in his mind, he unconsciously cuts two-thirds of his newly acquired circle the next afternoon, and the following winter, after a ten-months' absence, he innocently ignores the other third. So hopelessly has he offended in this way, that last season, on being presented to a club member, the latter peevishly blurted out:

"This is the fourth time I have been introduced to Mr. Blank, but he never remembers me," and glared coldly at him, laying it all down to my friend's snobbishness and to the airs of a New Yorker when away from home. If instead of being sacrificed to the introducer's mistaken zeal my poor friend had been left quietly to himself, he would in good time have met the people congenial to him and avoided giving offence to a number of kindly gentlemen.

This introducing mania takes an even more aggressive form in the hostess, who imagines that she is lacking in hospitality if any two people in her drawing-room are not made known to each other. No matter how interested you may be in a chat with a friend, you will see her bearing down upon you, bringing in tow the one human being you have carefully avoided for years. Escape seems impossible, but as a forlorn hope you fling yourself into conversation with your nearest neighbor, trying by your absorbed

manner to ward off the calamity. In vain! With a tap on your elbow your smiling hostess introduces you and, having spoiled your afternoon, flits off in search of other prey.

The question of introductions is one on which it is impossible to lay down any fixed rules. There must constantly occur situations where one's acts must depend upon a kindly consideration for other people's feelings, which after all, is only another name for tact. Nothing so plainly shows the breeding of a man or woman as skill in solving problems of this kind without giving offence.

Foreigners, with their greater knowledge of the world, rarely fall into the error of indiscriminate introducing, appreciating what a presentation means and what obligations it entails. The English fall into exactly the contrary error from ours, and carry it to absurd lengths. Starting with the assumption that everybody knows everybody, and being aware of the general dread of meeting "detrimentals," they avoid the difficulty by making no introductions. This may work well among themselves, but it is trying to a stranger whom they have been good enough to ask to their tables, to sit out the meal between two people who ignore his presence and converse across him; for an Englishman will expire sooner than speak to a person to whom he has not been introduced.

The French, with the marvellous tact that has for centuries made them the law-givers on

all subjects of etiquette and breeding, have another way of avoiding useless introductions. They assume that two people meeting in a drawing-room belong to the same world and so chat pleasantly with those around them. On leaving the *salon* the acquaintance is supposed to end, and a gentleman who should at another time or place bow or speak to the lady who had offered him a cup of tea and talked pleasantly to him over it at a friend's reception, would commit a gross breach of etiquette.

I was once present at a large dinner given in Cologne to the American Geographical Society. No sooner was I seated than my two neighbors turned towards me mentioning their names and waiting for me to do the same. After that the conversation flowed on as among friends. This custom struck me as exceedingly well-bred and calculated to make a foreigner feel at his ease.

Among other curious types, there are people so constituted that they are unhappy if a single person can be found in the room to whom they have not been introduced. It does not matter who the stranger may be or what chance there is of finding him congenial. They must be presented; nothing else will content them. If you are chatting with a friend you feel a pull at your sleeve, and in an audible aside, they ask for an introduction. The aspirant will then bring up and present the members of his family who happen to be near. After that he seems to be at ease,

and having absolutely nothing to say will soon drift off. Our public men suffer terribly from promiscuous introductions; it is a part of a political career; a good memory for names and faces and a cordial manner under fire have often gone a long way in floating a statesman on to success.

Demand, we are told, creates supply. During a short stay in a Florida hotel last winter, I noticed a curious little man who looked like a cross between a waiter and a musician. As he spoke to me several times and seemed very officious, I asked who he was. The answer was so grotesque that I could not believe my ears. I was told that he held the position of official "introducer," or master of ceremonies, and that the guests under his guidance became known to each other, danced, rode, and married to their own and doubtless to his satisfaction. The further west one goes the more pronounced this mania becomes. Everybody is introduced to everybody on all imaginable occasions. If a man asks you to take a drink, he presents you to the bar-tender. If he takes you for a drive, the cab-driver is introduced. "Boots" makes you acquainted with the chambermaid, and the hotel proprietor unites you in the bonds of friendship with the clerk at the desk. Intercourse with one's fellows becomes one long debauch of introduction. In this country where every liberty is respected, it is a curious fact that we should be denied the most important of all rights, that of choosing our acquaintances.

No. 34

A Question and an Answer

DEAR IDLER:

I HAVE been reading your articles in The Evening Post. *They are really most amusing! You do know such a lot about people and things, that I am tempted to write and ask you a question on a subject that is puzzling me. What is it that is necessary to succeed—socially? There! It is out! Please do not laugh at me. Such funny people get on and such clever, agreeable ones fail, that I am all at sea. Now do be nice and answer me, and you will have a very grateful*

ADMIRER.

The above note, in a rather juvenile feminine hand, and breathing a faint perfume of *violette de Parme*, was part of the morning's mail that I found lying on my desk a few days ago, in delightful contrast to the bills and advertisements which formed the bulk of my correspondence. It would suppose a stoicism greater than I possess, not to have felt a thrill of satisfaction in its perusal. There was, then, some one who read with pleasure what I wrote, and who had been moved to consult me on a question (evidently to her) of importance. I instantly decided to do my best for the edification of my fair correspondent (for no doubt entered my head that she was both young and fair), the more readily because that very question had frequently presented itself to my own mind on observing the very capri-

cious choice of Dame "Fashion" in the distribution of her favors.

That there are people who succeed brilliantly and move from success to success, amid an applauding crowd of friends and admirers, while others, apparently their superiors in every way, are distanced in the race, is an undeniable fact. You have but to glance around the circle of your acquaintances and relations to be convinced of this anomaly. To a reflecting mind the question immediately presents itself, Why is this? General society is certainly cultivated enough to appreciate intelligence and superior endowments. How then does it happen that the social favorites are so often lacking in the qualities which at a first glance would seem indispensable to success?

Before going any further let us stop a moment, and look at the subject from another side, for it is more serious than appears to be on the surface. To be loved by those around us, to stand well in the world, is certainly the most legitimate as well as the most common of ambitions, as well as the incentive to most of the industry and perseverance in life. Aside from science, which is sometimes followed for itself alone, and virtue, which we are told looks for no other reward, the hope which inspires a great deal of the persistent efforts we see, is generally that of raising one's self and those one loves by one's efforts into a sphere higher than where cruel fate had placed

them; that they, too, may take their place in the sunshine and enjoy the good things of life. This ambition is often purely disinterested; a life of hardest toil is cheerfully borne, with the hope (for sole consolation) that dear ones will profit later by all the work, and live in a circle the patient toiler never dreams of entering. Surely he is a stern moralist who would deny this satisfaction to the breadwinner of a family.

There are doubtless many higher motives in life, more elevated goals toward which struggling humanity should strive. If you examine the average mind, however, you will be pretty sure to find that success is the touchstone by which we judge our fellows and what, in our hearts, we admire the most. That is not to be wondered at, either, for we have done all we can to implant it there. From a child's first opening thought, it is impressed upon him that the great object of existence is to succeed. Did a parent ever tell a child to try and stand last in his class? And yet humility is a virtue we admire in the abstract. Are any of us willing to step aside and see our inferiors pass us in the race? That is too much to ask of poor humanity. Were other and higher standards to be accepted, the structure of civilization as it exists to-day would crumble away and the great machine run down.

In returning to my correspondent and her perfectly legitimate desire to know the road to success, we must realize that to a large part of

the world social success is the only kind they understand. The great inventors and benefactors of mankind live too far away on a plane by themselves to be the object of jealousy to any but a very small circle; on the other hand, in these days of equality, especially in this country where caste has never existed, the social world seems to hold out alluring and tangible gifts to him who can enter its enchanted portals. Even politics, to judge by the actions of some of our legislators, of late, would seem to be only a stepping-stone to its door!

"But my question," I hear my fair interlocutor saying. "You are not answering it!"

All in good time, my dear. I am just about to do so. Did you ever hear of Darwin and his theory of "selection?" It would be a slight to your intelligence not to take it for granted that you had. Well, my observations in the world lead me to believe that we follow there unconsciously, the same rules that guide the wild beasts in the forest. Certain individuals are endowed by nature with temperaments which make them take naturally to a social life and shine there. In it they find their natural element. They develop freely just where others shrivel up and disappear. There is continually going on unseen a "natural selection," the discarding of unfit material, the assimilation of new and congenial elements from outside, with the logical result of a survival of the fittest. Aside from

this, you will find in "the world," as anywhere else, that the person who succeeds is generally he who has been willing to give the most of his strength and mind to that one object, and has not allowed the flowers on the hillside to distract him from his path, remembering also that genius is often but the "capacity for taking infinite pains."

There are people so constituted that they cheerfully give the efforts of a lifetime to the attainment of a brilliant social position. No fatigue is too great, and no snubs too bitter to be willingly undergone in pursuit of the cherished object. You will never find such an individual, for instance, wandering in the flowery byways that lead to art or letters, for that would waste his time. If his family are too hard to raise, he will abandon the attempt and rise without them, for he cannot help himself. He is but an atom working as blindly upward as the plant that pushes its mysterious way towards the sun. Brains are not necessary. Good looks are but a trump the more in the "hand." Manners may help, but are not essential. The object can be and is attained daily without all three. Wealth is but the oil that makes the machinery run more smoothly. The all-important factor is the desire to succeed, so strong that it makes any price seem cheap, and that can pay itself by a step gained, for mortification and weariness and heart-burnings.

There, my dear, is the secret of success! I stop because I feel myself becoming bitter, and that is a frame of mind to be carefully avoided, because it interferes with the digestion and upsets one's gentle calm! I have tried to answer your question. The answer resolves itself into these two things; that it is necessary to be born with qualities which you may not possess, and calls for sacrifices you would doubtless be unwilling to make. It remains with you to decide if the little game is worth the candle. The delightful common sense I feel quite sure you possess reassures me as to your answer.

Take gayly such good things as may float your way, and profit by them while they last. Wander off into all the cross-roads that tempt you. Stop often to lend a helping hand to a less fortunate traveller. Rest in the heat of the day, as your spirit prompts you. Sit down before the sunset and revel in its beauty and you will find your voyage through life much more satisfactory to look back to and full of far sweeter memories than if by sacrificing any of these pleasures you had attained the greatest of "positions."

No. 35

Living on Your Friends

THACKERAY devoted a chapter in "Vanity Fair" to the problem "How to Live Well on Nothing a Year." It was neither a very new nor a very ingenious expedient that "Becky" resorted to when she discounted her husband's position and connection to fleece the tradespeople and cheat an old family servant out of a year's rent. The author might more justly have used his clever phrase in describing "Major Pendennis's" agreeable existence. We have made great progress in this, as in almost every other mode of living, in the latter half of the Victorian era; intelligent individuals of either sex, who know the ropes, can now as easily lead the existence of a multi-millionaire (with as much satisfaction to themselves and their friends) as though the bank account, with all its attendant worries, stood in their own names. This subject is so vast, its ramifications so far-reaching and complicated, that one hesitates before launching into an analysis of it. It will be better simply to give a few interesting examples, and a general rule or two, for the enlightenment and guidance of ingenious souls.

Human nature changes little; all that our educational and social training has accomplished is a smoothing of the surface. One of the most

striking proofs of this is, that here in our primitive country, as soon as accumulation of capital allowed certain families to live in great luxury, they returned to the ways of older aristocracies, and, with other wants, felt the necessity of a court about them, ladies and gentlemen in waiting, pages and jesters. Nature abhors a vacuum, so a class of people immediately felt an irresistible impulse to rush in and fill the void. Our aristocrats were not even obliged to send abroad to fill these vacancies, as they were for their footmen and butlers; the native article was quite ready and willing and, considering the little practice it could have had, proved wonderfully adapted to the work.

When the mania for building immense country houses and yachts (the owning of opera boxes goes a little further back) first attacked this country, the builders imagined that, once completed, it would be the easiest, as well as the most delightful task to fill them with the pick of their friends, that they could get all the talented and agreeable people they wanted by simply making a sign. To their astonishment, they discovered that what appeared so simple was a difficult, as well as a thankless labor. I remember asking a lady who had owned a "proscenium" at the old Academy, why she had decided not to take a box in the (then) new opera-house.

"Because, having passed thirty years of my life inviting people to sit in my box, I intend now to rest." It is very much the same thing

with yachts. A couple who had determined to go around the world, in their lately finished boat, were dumbfounded to find their invitations were not eagerly accepted. After exhausting the small list of people they really wanted, they began with others indifferent to them, and even then filled out their number with difficulty. A hostess who counts on a series of house parties through the autumn months, must begin early in the summer if she is to have the guests she desires.

It is just here that the "professional," if I may be allowed to use such an expression, comes to the front. He is always available. It is indifferent to him if he starts on a tour around the world or for a winter spree to Montreal. He is always amusing, good-humored, and can be counted on at the last moment to fill any vacant place, without being the least offended at the tardy invitation, for he belongs to the class who have discovered "how to live well on nothing a year." Luxury is as the breath of his nostrils, but his means allow of little beyond necessities. The temptation must be great when everything that he appreciates most (and cannot afford) is urged upon him. We should not pose as too stern moralists, and throw stones at him; for there may enter more "best French plate" into the composition of our own houses than we imagine.

It is here our epoch shows its improvement over earlier and cruder days. At present no toad-

eating is connected with the acceptance of hospitality, or, if occasionally a small "batrachian" is offered, it is so well disguised by an accomplished *chef*, and served on such exquisite old Dresden, that it slips down with very little effort. Even this rarely occurs, unless the guest has allowed himself to become the inmate of a residence or yacht. Then he takes his chance with other members of the household, and if the host or hostess happens to have a bad temper as a set-off to their good table, it is apt to fare ill with our friend.

So far, I have spoken of this class in the masculine, which is an error, as the art is successfully practised by the weaker sex, with this shade of difference. As an unmarried woman is in less general demand, she is apt to attach herself to one dear friend, always sure to be a lady in possession of fine country and city houses and other appurtenances of wealth, often of inferior social standing; so that there is give and take, the guest rendering real service to an ambitious hostess. The feminine aspirant need not be handsome. On the contrary, an agreeable plainness is much more acceptable, serving as a foil. But she must be excellent in all games, from golf to piquet, and willing to play as often and as long as required. She must also cheerfully go in to dinner with the blue ribbon bore of the evening, only asked on account of his pretty wife (by the bye, why is it that Beauty

is so often flanked by the Beast?), and sit between him and the "second prize" bore. These two worthies would have been the portion of the hostess fifteen years ago; she would have considered it her duty to absorb them and prevent her other guests suffering. *Mais nous avons changé tout cela.* The lady of the house now thinks first of amusing herself, and arranges to sit between two favorites.

Society has become much simpler, and especially less expensive, for unmarried men than it used to be. Even if a hostess asks a favor in return for weeks of hospitality, the sacrifice she requires of a man is rarely greater than a cotillion with an unattractive débutante whom she is trying to launch; or the sitting through a particularly dull opera in order to see her to the carriage, her lord and master having slipped off early to his club and a quiet game of pool. Many people who read these lines are old enough to remember that prehistoric period when unmarried girls went to the theatre and parties, alone with the men they knew. This custom still prevails in our irrepressible West. It was an arrangement by which all the expenses fell on the man—theatre tickets, carriages if it rained, and often a bit of supper after. If a youth asked a girl to dance the cotillion, he was expected to send a bouquet, sure to cost between twenty and twenty-five dollars. What a blessed change for the impecunious swell when all this went out of fashion! New

York is his paradise now; in other parts of the world something is still expected of him. In France it takes the form of a handsome bag of bon-bons on New Year's Day, if he has accepted hospitality during the past year. While here he need do absolutely nothing (unless he wishes to), the occasional leaving of a card having been suppressed of late by our *jeunesse dorée*, five minutes of their society in an opera box being estimated (by them) as ample return for a dinner or a week in a country house.

The truth of it is, there are so few men who "go out" (it being practically impossible for any one working at a serious profession to sit up night after night, even if he desired), and at the same time so many women insist on entertaining to amuse themselves or better their position, that the men who go about get spoiled and almost come to consider the obligation conferred, when they dine out. There is no more amusing sight than poor paterfamilias sitting in the club between six and seven P. M. pretending to read the evening paper, but really with his eye on the door; he has been sent down by his wife to "get a man," as she is one short for her dinner this evening. He must be one who will fit in well with the other guests; hence papa's anxious look, and the reason the editorial gets so little of his attention! Watch him as young "professional" lounges in. There is just his man—if he only happens to be disengaged! You will see

"Pater" cross the room and shake hands, then, after a few minutes' whispered conversation, he will walk down to his coupé with such a relieved look on his face. Young "professional," who is in faultless evening dress, will ring for a cocktail, and take up the discarded evening paper to pass the time till eight twenty-five.

Eight twenty-five, advisedly, for he will be the last to arrive, knowing, clever dog, how much *éclat* it gives one to have a room full of people asking each other, "Whom are we waiting for?" when the door opens, and he is announced. He will stay a moment after the other guests have gone and receive the most cordial pressures of the hand from a grateful hostess (if not spoken words of thanks) in return for eating an exquisitely cooked dinner, seated between two agreeable women, drinking irreproachable wine, smoking a cigar, and washing the whole down with a glass of 1830 brandy, or some priceless historic madeira.

There is probably a moral to be extracted from all this. But frankly my ethics are so mixed that I fail to see where the blame lies, and which is the less worthy individual, the ostentatious axe-grinding host or the interested guest. One thing, however, I see clearly, viz., that life is very agreeable to him who starts in with few prejudices, good manners, a large amount of well-concealed "cheek" and the happy faculty of taking things as they come.

No. 36

American Society in Italy

THE phrase at the head of this chapter and other sentences, such as "American Society in Paris," or London, are constantly on the lips of people who should know better. In reality these societies do not exist. Does my reader pause, wondering if he can believe his eyes? He has doubtless heard all his life of these delightful circles, and believes in them. He may even have dined, *en passant*, at the "palace" of some resident compatriot in Rome or Florence, under the impression that he was within its mystic limits. Illusion! An effect of mirage, making that which appears quite tangible and solid when viewed from a distance dissolve into thin air as one approaches; like the mirage, cheating the weary traveller with a vision of what he most longs for.

Forty, even fifty years ago, there lived in Rome a group of very agreeable people; Story and the two Greenoughs and Crawford, the sculptor (father of the brilliant novelist of to-day); Charlotte Cushman (who divided her time between Rome and Newport), and her friend Miss Stebbins, the sculptress, to whose hands we owe the bronze fountain on the Mall in our Park; Rogers, then working at the bronze doors of our capitol, and many other cultivated and

agreeable people. Hawthorne passed a couple of winters among them, and the tone of that society is reflected in his "Marble Faun." He took Story as a model for his "Kenyon," and was the first to note the exotic grace of an American girl in that strange setting. They formed as transcendental and unworldly a group as ever gathered about a "tea" table. Great things were expected of them and their influence, but they disappointed the world, and, with the exception of Hawthorne, are being fast forgotten.

Nothing could be simpler than life in the papal capital in those pleasant days. Money was rare, but living was delightfully inexpensive. It was about that time, if I do not mistake, that a list was published in New York of the citizens worth one hundred thousand dollars; and it was not a long one! The Roman colony took "tea" informally with each other, and "received" on stated evenings in their studios (when mulled claret and cakes were the only refreshment offered; very bad they were, too), and migrated in the summer to the mountains near Rome or to Sorrento. In the winter months their circle was enlarged by a contingent from home. Among wealthy New Yorkers, it was the fashion in the early fifties to pass a winter in Rome, when, together with his other dissipations, paterfamilias would sit to one of the American sculptors for his bust, which accounts for the horrors one now runs across in dark corners of country houses,—

ghostly heads in "chin whiskers" and Roman draperies.

The son of one of these pioneers, more rich than cultivated, noticed the other day, while visiting a friend of mine, an exquisite eighteenth-century bust of Madame de Pompadour, the pride of his hostess's drawing-room. "Ah!" said Midas, "are busts the fashion again? I have one of my father, done in Rome in 1850. I will bring it down and put it in my parlor."

The travellers consulted the residents in their purchases of copies of the old masters, for there were fashions in these luxuries as in everything else. There was a run at that time on the "Madonna in the Chair;" and "Beatrice Cenci" was long prime favorite. Thousands of the latter leering and winking over her everlasting shoulder, were solemnly sent home each year. No one ever dreamed of buying an original painting! The tourists also developed a taste for large marble statues, "Nydia, the Blind Girl of Pompeii" (people read Bulwer, Byron and the Bible then) being in such demand that I knew one block in lower Fifth Avenue that possessed seven blind Nydias, all life-size, in white marble,—a form of decoration about as well adapted to those scanty front parlors as a steam engine or a carriage and pair would have been. I fear Bulwer's heroine is at a discount now, and often wonder as I see those old residences turning into shops, what has become of the seven white ele-

phants and all their brothers and sisters that our innocent parents brought so proudly back from Italy! I have succeeded in locating two statues evidently imported at that time. They grace the back steps of a rather shabby villa in the country, —Demosthenes and Cicero, larger than life, dreary, funereal memorials of the follies of our fathers.

The simple days we have been speaking of did not, however, outlast the circle that inaugurated them. About 1867 a few rich New Yorkers began "trying to know the Italians" and go about with them. One family, "up to snuff" in more senses than one, married their daughter to the scion of a princely house, and immediately a large number of her compatriots were bitten with the madness of going into Italian society.

In 1870, Rome became the capital of united Italy. The court removed there. The "improvements" began. Whole quarters were remodelled, and the dear old Rome of other days, the Rome of Hawthorne and Madame de Staël, was swept away. With this new state of things came a number of Americo-Italian marriages, more or less successful; and anything like an American society, properly so-called, disappeared. To-day families of our compatriots passing the winter months in Rome are either tourists who live in hotels, and see sights, or go (as far as they can) into Italian society.

The Queen of Italy, who speaks excellent English, developed a *penchant* for Americans, and has attached several who married Italians to her person in different court capacities; indeed, the old "Black" society, who have remained true to the Pope, when they wish to ridicule the new "White" or royal circle, call it the "American court!" The feeling is bitter still between the "Blacks" and "Whites," and an American girl who marries into one of these circles must make up her mind to see nothing of friends or relatives in the opposition ranks. It is said that an amalgamation is being brought about, but it is slow work; a generation will have to die out before much real mingling of the two courts will take place. As both these circles are poor, very little entertainment goes on. One sees a little life in the diplomatic world, and the King and Queen give a ball or two during the winter, but since the repeated defeats of the Italian arms in Africa, and the heavy financial difficulties (things these sovereigns take very seriously to heart), there has not been much "go" in the court entertainments.

The young set hope great things of the new Princess of Naples, the bride of the heir-apparent, a lady who is credited with being full of fun and life; it is fondly imagined that she will set the ball rolling again. By the bye, her first lady-in-waiting, the young Duchess del Monte of Naples, was an American girl, and a very pretty

one, too. She enjoyed for some time the enviable distinction of being the youngest and handsomest duchess in Europe, until Miss Vanderbilt married Marlborough and took the record from her. The Prince and Princess of Naples live at their Neapolitan capital, and will not do much to help things in Rome. Besides which he is very delicate and passes for not being any too fond of the world.

What makes things worse is that the great nobles are mostly "land poor," and even the richer ones burned their fingers in the craze for speculation that turned all Rome upside down in the years following 1870 and Italian unity, when they naïvely imagined their new capital was to become again after seventeen centuries the metropolis of the world. Whole quarters of new houses were run up for a population that failed to appear; these houses now stand empty and are fast going to ruin. So that little in the way of entertaining is to be expected from the bankrupts. They are a genial race, these Italian nobles, and welcome rich strangers and marry them with much enthusiasm—just a shade too much, perhaps—the girl counting for so little and her *dot* for so much in the matrimonial scale. It is only necessary to keep open house to have the pick of the younger ones as your guests. They will come to entertainments at American houses and bring all their relations, and dance, and dine, and flirt with great good humor and

persistency; but if there is not a good solid fortune in the background, in the best of securities, the prettiest American smiles never tempt them beyond flirtation; the season over, they disappear up into their mountain villas to wait for a new importation from the States.

In Rome, as well as in the other Italian cities, there are, of course, still to be found Americans in some numbers (where on the Continent will you not find them?), living quietly for study or economy. But they are not numerous or united enough to form a society; and are apt to be involved in bitter strife among themselves.

Why, you ask, should Americans quarrel among themselves?

Some years ago I was passing the summer months on the Rhine at a tiny German watering-place, principally frequented by English, who were all living together in great peace and harmony, until one fatal day, when an Earl appeared. He was a poor Irish Earl, very simple and unoffending, but he brought war into that town, heart-burnings, envy, and backbiting. The English colony at once divided itself into two camps, those who knew the Earl and those who did not. And peace fled from our little society. You will find in every foreign capital among the resident Americans, just such a state of affairs as convulsed that German spa. The native "swells" have come to be the apple of discord that divides our good people among themselves. Those who

have been successful in knowing the foreigners avoid their compatriots and live with their new friends, while the other group who, from laziness, disinclination, or principle (?) have remained true to their American circle, cannot resist calling the others snobs, and laughing (a bit enviously, perhaps) at their upward struggles.

It is the same in Florence. The little there was left of an American society went to pieces on that rock. Our parents forty years ago seem to me to have been much more self-respecting and sensible. They knew perfectly well that there was nothing in common between themselves and the Italian nobility, and that those good people were not going to put themselves out to make the acquaintance of a lot of strangers, mostly of another religion, unless it was to be materially to their advantage. So they left them quietly alone. I do not pretend to judge any one's motives, but confess I cannot help regarding with suspicion a foreigner who leaves his own circle to mingle with strangers. It resembles too closely the amiabilities of the wolf for the lamb, or the sudden politeness of a school-boy to a little girl who has received a box of candies.

No. 37

The Newport of the Past

FEW of the "carriage ladies and gentlemen" who disport themselves in Newport during the summer months, yachting and dancing through the short season, then flitting away to fresh fields and pastures new, realize that their daintily shod feet have been treading historic ground, or care to cast a thought back to the past. Oddly enough, to the majority of people the past is a volume rarely opened. Not that it bores them to read it, but because they, like children, want some one to turn over its yellow leaves and point out the pictures to them. Few of the human motes that dance in the rays of the afternoon sun as they slant across the little Park, think of the fable which asserts that a sea-worn band of adventurous men, centuries before the Cabots or the Genoese discoverer thought of crossing the Atlantic, had pushed bravely out over untried seas and landed on this rocky coast. Yet one apparent evidence of their stay tempts our thoughts back to the times when it is said to have been built as a bower for a king's daughter. Longfellow, in the swinging verse of his "Skeleton in Armor," breathing of the sea and the Norseman's fatal love, has thrown such a glamour of poetry around the tower, that one would fain believe all he relates. The hardy

Norsemen, if they ever came here, succumbed in their struggle with the native tribes, or, discouraged by death and hardships, sailed away, leaving the clouds of oblivion to close again darkly around this continent, and the fog of discussion to circle around the "Old Mill."

The little settlement of another race, speaking another tongue, that centuries later sprang up in the shadow of the tower, quickly grew into a busy and prosperous city, which, like New York, its rival, was captured and held by the English. To walk now through some of its quaint, narrow streets is to step back into Revolutionary days. Hardly a house has changed since the time when the red coats of the British officers brightened the prim perspectives, and turned loyal young heads as they passed.

At the corner of Spring and Pelham Streets, still stands the residence of General Prescott, who was carried away prisoner by his opponents, they having rowed down in whale-boats from Providence for the attack. Rochambeau, our French ally, lodged lower down in Mary Street. In the tower of Trinity, one can read the epitaph of the unfortunate Chevalier de Ternay, commander of the sea forces, whose body lies near by. Many years later his relative, the Duc de Noailles, when Minister to this country, had this simple tablet repaired and made a visit to the spot.

A long period of prosperity followed the Revolution, during which Newport grew and flour-

ished. Our pious and God-fearing "forbears," having secured personal and religious liberty, proceeded to inaugurate a most successful and remunerative trade in rum and slaves. It was a triangular transaction and yielded a three-fold profit. The simple population of that day, numbering less than ten thousand souls, possessed twenty distilleries; finding it a physical impossibility to drink *all* the rum, they conceived the happy thought of sending the surplus across to the coast of Africa, where it appears to have been much appreciated by the native chiefs, who eagerly exchanged the pick of their loyal subjects for that liquid. These poor brutes were taken to the West Indies and exchanged for sugar, laden with which, the vessels returned to Newport.

Having introduced the dusky chieftains to the charms of delirium tremens and their subjects to life-long slavery, one can almost see these pious deacons proceeding to church to offer up thanks for the return of their successful vessels. Alas! even "the best laid schemes of mice and men" come to an end. The War of 1812, the opening of the Erie Canal and sundry railways struck a blow at Newport commerce, from which it never recovered. The city sank into oblivion, and for over thirty years not a house was built there.

It was not until near 1840 that the Middletons and Izzards and other wealthy and aristocratic Southern families were tempted to Newport by the climate and the facilities it offered for bath-

ing, shooting and boating. A boarding-house or two sufficed for the modest wants of the newcomers, first among which stood the Aquidneck, presided over by kind Mrs. Murray. It was not until some years later, when New York and Boston families began to appreciate the place, that the first hotels were built,—the Atlantic on the square facing the old mill, the Bellevue and Fillmore on Catherine Street, and finally the original Ocean House, destroyed by fire in 1845 and rebuilt as we see it to-day. The croakers of the epoch considered it much too far out of town to be successful, for at its door the open fields began, a gate there separating the town from the country across which a straggling, half-made road, closed by innumerable gates, led along the cliffs and out across what is now the Ocean Drive. The principal roads at that time led inland; any one wishing to drive seaward had to descend every two or three minutes to open a gate. The youth of the day discovered a source of income in opening and closing these for pennies.

Fashion had decreed that the correct hour for dancing was 11 A. M., and *matinées dansantes* were regularly given at the hotels, our grandmothers appearing in *décolleté* muslin frocks adorned with broad sashes, and disporting themselves gayly until the dinner hour. Low-neck dresses were the rule, not only for these informal entertainments, but as every-day wear for young girls,—an old lady only the other day telling me she

had never worn a "high-body" until after her marriage. Two o'clock found all the beauties and beaux dining. How incredulously they would have laughed if any one had prophesied that their grandchildren would prefer eight forty-five as a dinner hour!

The opening of Bellevue Avenue marked another epoch in the history of Newport. About that time Governor Lawrence bought the whole of Ochre Point farm for fourteen thousand dollars, and Mr. de Rham built on the newly opened road the first "cottage," which stands to-day modestly back from the avenue opposite Perry Street. If houses have souls, as Hawthorne averred, and can remember and compare, what curious thoughts must pass through the oaken brain of this simple construction as it sees its marble neighbors rearing their vast façades among trees. The trees, too, are an innovation, for when the de Rham cottage was built and Mrs. Cleveland opened her new house at the extreme end of Rough Point (the second summer residence in the place) it is doubtful if a single tree broke the rocky monotony of the landscape from the Ocean House to Bateman's Point.

Governor Lawrence, having sold one acre of his Ochre Point farm to Mr. Pendleton for the price he himself had paid for the whole, proceeded to build a stone wall between the two properties down to the water's edge. The population of Newport had been accustomed to

take their Sunday airings and moonlight rambles along "the cliffs," and viewed this obstruction of their favorite walk with dismay. So strong was their feeling that when the wall was completed the young men of the town repaired there in the night and tore it down. It was rebuilt, the mortar being mixed with broken glass. This infuriated the people to such an extent that the whole populace, in broad daylight, accompanied by the summer visitors, destroyed the wall and threw the materials into the sea. Lawrence, bent on maintaining what he considered his rights, called the law to his aid. It was then discovered that an immemorial riverain right gave the fishermen and the public generally, access to the shore for fishing, and also to collect seaweed,—a right of way that no one could obstruct.

This was the beginning of the long struggle between the cliff-dwellers and the townspeople; each new property-owner, disgusted at the idea that all the world can stroll at will across his well-kept lawns, has in turn tried his hand at suppressing the now famous "walk." Not only do the public claim the liberty to walk there, but also the right to cross any property to get to the shore. At this moment the city fathers and the committee of the new buildings at Bailey's Beach are wrangling as gayly as in Governor Lawrence's day over a bit of wall lately constructed across the end of Bellevue Avenue. A new expedient has been hit upon by some of

the would-be exclusive owners of the cliffs; they have lowered the "walk" out of sight, thus insuring their own privacy and in no way interfering with the rights of the public.

Among the gentlemen who settled in Newport about Governor Lawrence's time was Lord Baltimore (Mr. Calvert, he preferred to call himself), who remained there until his death. He was shy of referring to his English peerage, but would willingly talk of his descent through his mother from Peter Paul Rubens, from whom had come down to him a château in Holland and several splendid paintings. The latter hung in the parlor of the modest little dwelling, where I was taken to see them and their owner many years ago. My introducer on this occasion was herself a lady of no ordinary birth, being the daughter of Stuart, our greatest portrait painter. I have passed many quiet hours in the quaint studio (the same her father had used), hearing her prattle—as she loved to do if she found a sympathetic listener—of her father, of Washington and his pompous ways, and the many celebrities who had in turn posed before Stuart's easel. She had been her father's companion and aid, present at the sittings, preparing his brushes and colors, and painting in backgrounds and accessories; and would willingly show his palette and explain his methods and theories of color, his predilection for scrumbling shadows thinly in black and then painting boldly

in with body color. Her lessons had not profited much to the gentle, kindly old lady, for the productions of her own brush were far from resembling her great parent's work. She, however, painted cheerfully on to life's close, surrounded by her many friends, foremost among whom was Charlotte Cushman, who also passed the last years of her life in Newport. Miss Stuart was over eighty when I last saw her, still full of spirit and vigor, beginning the portrait of a famous beauty of that day, since the wife and mother of dukes.

Miss Stuart's death seems to close one of the chapters in the history of this city, and to break the last connecting link with its past. The world moves so quickly that the simple days and modest amusements of our fathers and grandfathers have already receded into misty remoteness. We look at their portraits and wonder vaguely at their graceless costumes. We know they trod these same streets, and laughed and flirted and married as we are doing to-day, but they seem to us strangely far away, like inhabitants of another sphere.

It is humiliating to think how soon we, too, shall have become the ancestors of a new and careless generation; fresh faces will replace our faded ones, young voices will laugh as they look at our portraits hanging in dark corners, wondering who we were, and (criticising the apparel we think so artistic and appropriate) how we could ever have made such guys of ourselves.

No. 38

A Conquest of Europe

THE most important event in modern history is the discovery of Europe by the Americans. Before it, the peoples of the Old World lived happy and contented in their own countries, practising the patriarchal virtues handed down to them from generations of forebears, ignoring alike the vices and benefits of modern civilization, as understood on this side of the Atlantic. The simple-minded Europeans remained at home, satisfied with the rank in life where they had been born, and innocent of the ways of the new world.

These peoples were, on the whole, not so much to be pitied, for they had many pleasing crafts and arts unknown to the invaders, which had enabled them to decorate their capitals with taste in a rude way; nothing really great like the lofty buildings and elevated railway structures, executed in American cities, but interesting as showing what an ingenious race, deprived of the secrets of modern science, could accomplish.

The more æsthetic of the newcomers even affected to admire the antiquated places of worship and residences they visited abroad, pointing out to their compatriots that in many cases marble, bronze and other old-fashioned materials had been so cleverly treated as to look al-

most like the superior cast-iron employed at home, and that some of the old paintings, preserved with veneration in the museums, had nearly the brilliancy of modern chromos. As their authors had, however, neglected to use a process lending itself to rapid reproduction, they were of no practical value. In other ways, the continental races, when discovered, were sadly behind the times. In business, they ignored the use of "corners," that backbone of American trade, and their ideas of advertising were but little in advance of those known among the ancient Greeks.

The discovery of Europe by the Americans was made about 1850, at which date the first bands of adventurers crossed the seas in search of amusement. The reports these pioneers brought back of the *naïveté*, politeness, and gullibility of the natives, and the cheapness of existence in their cities, caused a general exodus from the western to the eastern hemisphere. Most of the Americans who had used up their credit at home and those whose incomes were insufficient for their wants, immediately migrated to these happy hunting grounds, where life was inexpensive and credit unlimited.

The first arrivals enjoyed for some twenty years unique opportunities. They were able to live in splendor for a pittance that would barely have kept them in necessaries on their own side of the Atlantic, and to pick up valuable speci-

mens of native handiwork for nominal sums. In those happy days, to belong to the invading race was a sufficient passport to the good graces of the Europeans, who asked no other guarantees before trading with the new-comers, but flocked around them, offering their services and their primitive manufactures, convinced that Americans were all wealthy.

Alas! History ever repeats itself. As Mexicans and Peruvians, after receiving their conquerors with confidence and enthusiasm, came to rue the day they had opened their arms to strangers, so the European peoples, before a quarter of a century was over, realized that the hordes from across the sea who were over-running their lands, raising prices, crowding the native students out of the schools, and finally attempting to force an entrance into society, had little to recommend them or justify their presence except money. Even in this some of the intruders were unsatisfactory. Those who had been received into the "bosom" of hotels often forgot to settle before departing. The continental women who had provided the wives of discoverers with the raiment of the country (a luxury greatly affected by those ladies) found, to their disgust, that their new customers were often unable or unwilling to offer any remuneration.

In consequence of these and many other disillusions, Americans began to be called the "Destroyers," especially when it became known that

nothing was too heavy or too bulky to be carried away by the invaders, who tore the insides from the native houses, the paintings from the walls, the statues from the temples, and transported this booty across the seas, much in the same way as the Romans had plundered Greece. Elaborate furniture seemed especially to attract the new arrivals, who acquired vast quantities of it.

Here, however, the wily natives (who were beginning to appreciate their own belongings) had revenge. Immense quantities of worthless imitations were secretly manufactured and sold to the travellers at fabulous prices. The same artifice was used with paintings, said to be by great masters, and with imitations of old stuffs and bric-à-brac, which the ignorant and arrogant invaders pretended to appreciate and collect.

Previous to our arrival there had been an invasion of the Continent by the English about the year 1812. One of their historians, called Thackeray, gives an amusing account of this in the opening chapters of his "Shabby Genteel Story." That event, however, was unimportant in comparison with the great American movement, although both were characterized by the same total disregard of the feelings and prejudices of indigenous populations. The English then walked about the continental churches during divine service, gazing at the pictures and consulting their guide-books as unconcernedly as our compatriots do to-day. They also crowded

into theatres and concert halls, and afterwards wrote to the newspapers complaining of the bad atmosphere of those primitive establishments and of the long *entr'actes*.

As long as the invaders confined themselves to such trifles, the patient foreigners submitted to their overbearing and uncouth ways because of the supposed benefit to trade. The natives even went so far as to build hotels for the accommodation and delight of the invaders, abandoning whole quarters to their guests.

There was, however, a point at which complacency stopped. The older civilizations had formed among themselves restricted and exclusive societies, to which access was almost impossible to strangers. These sanctuaries tempted the immigrants, who offered their fairest virgins and much treasure for the privilege of admission. The indigenous aristocrats, who were mostly poor, yielded to these offers and a few Americans succeeded in forcing an entrance. But the old nobility soon became frightened at the number and vulgarity of the invaders, and withdrew severely into their shells, refusing to accept any further bribes either in the form of females or finance.

From this moment dates the humiliation of the discoverers. All their booty and plunder seemed worthless in comparison with the Elysian delights they imagined were concealed behind the closed doors of those holy places, visions of which tortured the women from the western hemisphere

and prevented their taking any pleasure in other victories. To be received into those inner circles became their chief ambition. With this end in view they dressed themselves in expensive costumes, took the trouble to learn the "lingo" spoken in the country, went to the extremity of copying the ways of the native women by painting their faces, and in one or two cases imitated the laxity of their morals.

In spite of these concessions, our women were not received with enthusiasm. On the contrary, the very name of an American became a byword and an abomination in every continental city. This prejudice against us abroad is hardly to be wondered at on reflecting what we have done to acquire it. The agents chosen by our government to treat diplomatically with the conquered nations, owe their selection to political motives rather than to their tact or fitness. In the large majority of cases men are sent over who know little either of the habits or languages prevailing in Europe.

The worst elements always follow in the wake of discovery. Our settlements abroad gradually became the abode of the compromised, the divorced, the socially and financially bankrupt.

Within the last decade we have found a way to revenge the slights put upon us, especially those offered to Americans in the capital of Gaul. Having for the moment no playwrights of our own, the men who concoct dramas, comedies,

and burlesques for our stage find, instead of wearying themselves in trying to produce original matter, that it is much simpler to adapt from French writers. This has been carried to such a length that entire French plays are now produced in New York signed by American names.

The great French playwrights can protect themselves by taking out American copyright, but if one of them omits this formality, the "conquerors" immediately seize upon his work and translate it, omitting intentionally all mention of the real author on their programmes. This season a play was produced of which the first act was taken from Guy de Maupassant, the second and third "adapted" from Sardou, with episodes introduced from other authors to brighten the mixture. The piece thus patched together is signed by a well-known Anglo-Saxon name, and accepted by our moral public, although the original of the first act was stopped by the Parisian police as too immoral for that gay capital.

Of what use would it be to "discover" a new continent unless the explorers were to reap some such benefits? Let us take every advantage that our proud position gives us, plundering the foreign authors, making penal settlements of their capitals, and ignoring their foolish customs and prejudices when we travel among them! In this way shall we effectually impress on the inferior races across the Atlantic the greatness of the American nation.

No. 39

A Race of Slaves

IT is all very well for us to have invaded Europe, and awakened that somnolent continent to the lights and delights of American ways; to have beautified the cities of the old world with graceful trolleys and illuminated the catacombs at Rome with electricity. Every true American must thrill with satisfaction at these achievements, and the knowledge that he belongs to a dominating race, before which the waning civilization of Europe must fade away and disappear.

To have discovered Europe and to rule as conquerors abroad is well, but it is not enough, if we are led in chains at home. It is recorded of a certain ambitious captain whose "Commentaries" made our school-days a burden, that "he preferred to be the first in a village rather than second at Rome." Oddly enough, *we* are contented to be slaves in our villages while we are conquerors in Rome. Can it be that the struggles of our ancestors for freedom were fought in vain? Did they throw off the yoke of kings, cross the Atlantic, found a new form of government on a new continent, break with traditions, and sign a declaration of independence, only that we should succumb, a century later, yielding the fruits of their hard-fought battles with craven supineness

into the hands of corporations and municipalities; humbly bowing necks that refuse to bend before anointed sovereigns, to the will of steamboat subordinates, the insolence of be-diamonded hotel-clerks, and the captious conductor?

Last week my train from Washington arrived in Jersey City on time. We scurried (like good Americans) to the ferry-boat, hot and tired and anxious to get to our destination; a hope deferred, however, for our boat was kept waiting forty long minutes, because, forsooth, another train from somewhere in the South was behind time. Expostulations were in vain. Being only the paying public, we had no rights that those autocrats, the officials, were bound to respect. The argument that if they knew the southern train to be so much behind, the ferry-boat would have plenty of time to take us across and return, was of no avail, so, like a cargo of "moo-cows" (as the children say), we submitted meekly. In order to make the time pass more pleasantly for the two hundred people gathered on the boat, a dusky potentate judged the moment appropriate to scrub the cabin floors. So, aided by a couple of subordinates, he proceeded to deluge the entire place in floods of water, obliging us to sit with our feet tucked up under us, splashing the ladies' skirts and our wraps and belongings.

Such treatment of the public would have raised a riot anywhere but in this land of freedom. Do you suppose any one murmured? Not

at all. The well-trained public had the air of being in church. My neighbors appeared astonished at my impatience, and informed me that they were often detained in that way, as the company was short of boats, but they hoped to have a new one in a year or two. This detail did not prevent that corporation advertising our train to arrive in New York at three-thirteen, instead of which we landed at four o'clock. If a similar breach of contract had happened in England, a dozen letters would have appeared in the "Times," and the grievance been well aired.

Another infliction to which all who travel in America are subjected is the brushing atrocity. Twenty minutes before a train arrives at its destination, the despot who has taken no notice of any one up to this moment, except to snub them, becomes suspiciously attentive and insists on brushing everybody. The dirt one traveller has been accumulating is sent in clouds into the faces of his neighbors. When he is polished off and has paid his "quarter" of tribute, the next man gets up, and the dirt is then brushed back on to number one, with number two's collection added.

Labiche begins one of his plays with two servants at work in a salon. "Dusting," says one of them, "is the art of sending the dirt from the chair on the right over to the sofa on the left." I always think of that remark when I see the process performed in a parlor car, for when it

is over we are all exactly where we began. If a man should shampoo his hair, or have his boots cleaned in a salon, he would be ejected as a boor; yet the idea apparently never enters the heads of those who soil and choke their fellow-passengers that the brushing might be done in the vestibule.

On the subject of fresh air and heat we are also in the hands of officials, dozens of passengers being made to suffer for the caprices of one of their number, or the taste of some captious invalid. In other lands the rights of minorities are often ignored. With us it is the contrary. One sniffling school-girl who prefers a temperature of 80 degrees can force a car full of people to swelter in an atmosphere that is death to them, because she refuses either to put on her wraps or to have a window opened.

Street railways are torture-chambers where we slaves are made to suffer in another way. You must begin to reel and plunge towards the door at least two blocks before your destination, so as to leap to the ground when the car slows up; otherwise the conductor will be offended with you, and carry you several squares too far, or with a jocose "Step lively," will grasp your elbow and shoot you out. Any one who should sit quietly in his place until the vehicle had come to a full stop, would be regarded by the slave-driver and his cargo as a *poseur* who was assuming airs.

The idea that cars and boats exist for the convenience of the public was exploded long ago. We are made, dozens of times a day, to feel that this is no longer the case. It is, on the contrary, brought vividly home to us that such conveyances are money-making machines in the possession of powerful corporations (to whom we, in our debasement, have handed over the freedom of our streets and rivers), and are run in the interest and at the discretion of their owners.

It is not only before the great and the powerful that we bow in submission. The shop-girl is another tyrant who has planted her foot firmly on the neck of the nation. She respects neither sex nor age. Ensconced behind the bulwark of her counter, she scorns to notice humble aspirants until they have performed a preliminary penance; a time she fills up in cheerful conversation addressed to other young tyrants, only deciding to notice customers when she sees their last grain of patience is exhausted. She is often of a merry mood, and if anything about your appearance or manner strikes her critical sense as amusing, will laugh gayly with her companions at your expense.

A French gentleman who speaks our language correctly but with some accent, told me that he found it impossible to get served in our stores, the shop-girls bursting with laughter before he could make his wants known.

Not long ago I was at the Compagnie Lyon-

naise in Paris with a stout American lady, who insisted on tipping her chair forward on its front legs as she selected some laces. Suddenly the chair flew from under her, and she sat violently on the polished floor in an attitude so supremely comic that the rest of her party were inwardly convulsed. Not a muscle moved in the faces of the well-trained clerks. The proprietor assisted her to rise as gravely as if he were bowing us to our carriage.

In restaurants American citizens are treated even worse than in the shops. You will see cowed customers who are anxious to get away to their business or pleasure sitting mutely patient, until a waiter happens to remember their orders. I do not know a single establishment in this city where the waiters take any notice of their customers' arrival, or where the proprietor comes, toward the end of the meal, to inquire if the dishes have been cooked to their taste. The interest so general on the Continent or in England is replaced here by the same air of being disturbed from more important occupations, that characterizes the shop-girl and elevator boy.

Numbers of our people live apparently in awe of their servants and the opinion of the tradespeople. One middle-aged lady whom I occasionally take to the theatre, insists when we arrive at her door on my accompanying her to the elevator, in order that the youth who presides therein may see that she has an escort, the opinion

of this subordinate apparently being of supreme importance to her. One of our "gilded youths" recently told me of a thrilling adventure in which he had figured. At the moment he was passing under an awning on his way to a reception, a gust of wind sent his hat gambolling down the block. "Think what a situation," he exclaimed. "There stood a group of my friends' footmen watching me. But I was equal to the situation, and entered the house as if nothing had happened!" Sir Walter Raleigh sacrificed a cloak to please a queen. This youth abandoned a new hat, fearing the laughter of a half-dozen servants.

One of the reasons why we have become so weak in the presence of our paid masters is that nowhere is the individual allowed to protest. The other night a friend who was with me at a theatre considered the acting inferior, and expressed his opinion by hissing. He was promptly ejected by a policeman. The man next me was, on the contrary, so pleased with the piece that he encored every song. I had paid to see the piece once, and rebelled at being obliged to see it twice to suit my neighbor. On referring the matter to the box-office, the caliph in charge informed me that the slaves he allowed to enter his establishment (like those who in other days formed the court of Louis XIV.) were permitted to praise, but were suppressed if they murmured dissent. In his *Mémoires*, Dumas, *père*, tells of a "first night" when three thousand people applauded a play of his

and one spectator hissed. "He was the only one I respected," said Dumas, "for the piece was bad, and that criticism spurred me on to improve it."

How can we hope for any improvement in the standard of our entertainments, the manners of our servants or the ways of corporations when no one complains? We are too much in a hurry to follow up a grievance and have it righted. "It doesn't pay," "I haven't got the time," are phrases with which all such subjects are dismissed. We will sit in over-heated cars, eat vilely cooked food, put up with insolence from subordinates, because it is too much trouble to assert our rights. Is the spirit that prompted the first shots on Lexington Common becoming extinct? Have the floods of emigration so diluted our Anglo-Saxon blood that we no longer care to fight for liberty? Will no patriot arise and lead a revolt against our tyrants?

I am prepared to follow such a leader, and have already marked my prey. First, I will slay a certain miscreant who sits at the receipt of customs in the box-office of an up-town theatre. For years I have tried to propitiate that satrap with modest politeness and feeble little jokes. He has never been softened by either, but continues to "chuck" the worst places out to me (no matter how early I arrive, the best have always been given to the speculators), and to frown down my attempts at self-assertion.

When I have seen this enemy at my feet, I

shall start down town (stopping on the way to brain the teller at my bank, who is perennially paring his nails, and refuses to see me until that operation is performed), to the office of a night-boat line, where the clerk has so often forced me, with hundreds of other weary victims, to stand in line like convicts, while he chats with a "lady friend," his back turned to us and his leg comfortably thrown over the arm of his chair. Then I will take my blood-stained way—but, no! It is better not to put my victims on their guard, but to abide my time in silence! Courage, fellow-slaves, our day will come!

No. 40

Introspection*

THE close of a year must bring even to the careless and the least inclined toward self-inspection, an hour of thoughtfulness, a desire to glance back across the past, and set one's mental house in order, before starting out on another stage of the journey for that none too distant bourne toward which we all are moving.

Our minds are like solitary dwellers in a vast residence, whom habit has accustomed to live in a few only of the countless chambers around them. We have collected from other parts of our lives mental furniture and bric-à-brac that time and association have endeared to us, have installed these meagre belongings convenient to our hand, and contrived an entrance giving facile access to our living-rooms, avoiding the effort of a long detour through the echoing corridors and disused salons behind. No acquaintances, and but few friends, penetrate into the private chambers of our thoughts. We set aside a common room for the reception of visitors, making it as cheerful as circumstances will allow and take care that the conversation therein rarely turns on any subject more personal than the view from the windows or the prophecies of the barometer.

In the old-fashioned brick palace at Kensing-

* December thirty-first, 1888.

ton, a little suite of rooms is carefully guarded from the public gaze, swept, garnished and tended as though the occupants of long ago were hourly expected to return. The early years of England's aged sovereign were passed in these simple apartments and by her orders they have been kept unchanged, the furniture and decorations remaining to-day as when she inhabited them. In one corner, is assembled a group of dolls, dressed in the quaint finery of 1825. A set of miniature cooking utensils stands near by. A child's scrapbooks and color-boxes lie on the tables. In one sunny chamber stands the little white-draped bed where the heiress to the greatest crown on earth dreamed her childish dreams, and from which she was hastily aroused one June morning to be saluted as Queen. So homelike and livable an air pervades the place, that one almost expects to see the lonely little girl of seventy years ago playing about the unpretending chambers.

Affection for the past and a reverence for the memory of the dead have caused the royal wife and mother to preserve with the same care souvenirs of her passage in other royal residences. The apartments that sheltered the first happy months of her wedded life, the rooms where she knew the joys and anxieties of maternity, have become for her consecrated sanctuaries, where the widowed, broken old lady comes on certain anniversaries to evoke the unforgotten past, to meditate and to pray.

Who, as the year is drawing to its close, does not open in memory some such sacred portal, and sit down in the familiar rooms to live over again the old hopes and fears, thrilling anew with the joys and temptations of other days? Yet, each year these pilgrimages into the past must become more and more lonely journeys; the friends whom we can take by the hand and lead back to our old homes become fewer with each decade. It would be a useless sacrilege to force some listless acquaintance to accompany us. He would not hear the voices that call to us, or see the loved faces that people the silent passages, and would wonder what attraction we could find in the stuffy, old-fashioned quarters.

Many people have such a dislike for any mental privacy that they pass their lives in public, or surrounded only by sporting trophies and games. Some enjoy living in their pantries, composing for themselves succulent dishes, and interested in the doings of the servants, their companions. Others have turned their salons into nurseries, or feel a predilection for the stable and the dog-kennels. Such people soon weary of their surroundings, and move constantly, destroying, when they leave old quarters, all the objects they had collected.

The men and women who have thus curtailed their belongings are, however, quite contented with themselves. No doubts ever harass them as to the commodity or appropriateness of their

lodgements and look with pity and contempt on friends who remain faithful to old habitations. The drawback to a migratory existence, however, is the fact that, as a French saying has put it, *Ceux qui se refusent les pensées sérieuses tombent dans les idées noires.* These people are surprised to find as the years go by that the futile amusements to which they have devoted themselves do not fill to their satisfaction all the hours of a lifetime. Having provided no books nor learned to practise any art, the time hangs heavily on their hands. They dare not look forward into the future, so blank and cheerless does it appear. The past is even more distasteful to them. So, to fill the void in their hearts, they hurry out into the crowd as a refuge from their own thoughts.

Happy those who care to revisit old abodes, childhood's remote wing, and the moonlit porches where they knew the rapture of a first-love whisper. Who can enter the chapel where their dead lie, and feel no blush of self-reproach, nor burning consciousness of broken faith nor wasted opportunities? The new year will bring to them as near an approach to perfect happiness as can be attained in life's journey. The fortunate mortals are rare who can, without a heartache or regret, pass through their disused and abandoned dwellings; who dare to open every door and enter all the silent rooms; who do not hurry shudderingly by some obscure corners, and return with

a sigh of relief to the cheerful sunlight and murmurs of the present.

Sleepless midnight hours come inevitably to each of us, when the creaking gates of subterranean passages far down in our consciousness open of themselves, and ghostly inhabitants steal out of awful vaults and force us to look again into their faces and touch their unhealed wounds.

An old lady whose cheerfulness under a hundred griefs and tribulations was a marvel and an example, once told a man who had come to her for counsel in a moment of bitter trouble, that she had derived comfort when difficulties loomed big around her by writing down all her cares and worries, making a list of the subjects that harassed her, and had always found that, when reduced to material written words, the dimensions of her troubles were astonishingly diminished. She recommended her procedure to the troubled youth, and prophesied that his anxieties would dwindle away in the clear atmosphere of pen and paper.

Introspection, the deliberate unlatching of closed wickets, has the same effect of stealing away the bitterness from thoughts that, if left in the gloom of semi-oblivion, will grow until they overshadow a whole life. It is better to follow the example of England's pure Queen, visiting on certain anniversaries our secret places and holding communion with the past, for it is by such scrutiny only

That men may rise on stepping-stones
Of their dead selves to higher things.

Those who have courage to perform thoroughly this task will come out from the silent chambers purified and chastened, more lenient to the faults and shortcomings of others, and better fitted to take up cheerfully the burdens of a new year.

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